DIALECTICS OF HUMAN NATURE IN MARX'S PHILOSOPHY

MEHMET TABAK

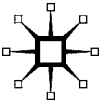
Dialectics of Human Nature in Marx's Philosophy

This page intentionally left blank

Dialectics of Human Nature in Marx's Philosophy

Mehmet Tabak

palgrave
macmillan



DIALECTICS OF HUMAN NATURE IN MARX'S PHILOSOPHY
Copyright © Mehmet Tabak, 2012.

Softcover reprint of the hardcover 1st edition 2012 978-0-320-34146-3
All rights reserved.

First published in 2012 by
PALGRAVE MACMILLAN®
in the United States—a division of St. Martin's Press LLC,
175 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10010.

Where this book is distributed in the UK, Europe and the rest of the World, this is by Palgrave Macmillan, a division of Macmillan Publishers Limited, registered in England, company number 785998, of Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 6XS.

Palgrave Macmillan is the global academic imprint of the above companies and has companies and representatives throughout the world.

Palgrave® and Macmillan® are registered trademarks in the United States, the United Kingdom, Europe and other countries.

ISBN 978-1-349-34433-8 ISBN 978-1-137-04314-6 (eBook)

DOI 10.1057/9781137043146

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Tabak, Mehmet.
Dialectics of human nature in Marx's philosophy / Mehmet Tabak.
p. cm.
Includes bibliographical references (p.).

1. Marx, Karl, 1818–1883. 2. Philosophical anthropology. I. Title.
B3305.M74T323 2012
193—dc23 2011050333

A catalogue record of the book is available from the British Library.

Design by Integra Software Services

First edition: July 2012

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Contents

Preface		vii
1	Marx's Conception of Human Nature: "Is There No Human Nature Just As There Is a Universal Nature of Plants and Stars?"	1
2	Historical Materialism: General Theory of History	25
3	Dialectical Determinations of the Structure of Society	51
4	Processes of Alienation and the Structure of Bourgeois Society	79
5	Marx's Critique of Law, Justice, and Morality	107
6	The State in Bourgeois Society	141
Epilogue: Missing Parts of the Organic Whole		169
Notes		173
Bibliography		213
Index		221

This page intentionally left blank

Preface

The main purpose of this book is to outline Karl Marx's philosophical system.[1] The present interpretation places his philosophy within the tradition of humanism, with the following proviso: Marx's humanism is not a separate doctrine, to be pitted against his materialism—historical or dialectical. Humanism, I argue, is the basis of his dialectical and historical materialism.

The concept of human nature is the "Archimedean point" of Marx's philosophy. Through a dialectical construction of this concept, he rejects the dualism between subject and object and comprehends them as the "objective totality."[2] This objective totality is the totality of "man and nature," [3] perceived as a historical process. Human nature, thus, constitutes the primary *standpoint* of his thought, precisely because "man" is the subject and the main substance of the historical objective totality.[4]

Human nature is Marx's *standpoint* in two separate but interrelated ways. It constitutes the first premise of his explanation and of his critical evaluation of the existing state of affairs. Said another way, the concept of human nature is the main determinant of historically shaped social totality (the structure and superstructure as the social whole), as it is also the standard with which a given social reality is measured against *human* needs. This dual, explanatory and critical, nature of Marx's primary standpoint follows from the fact that his dialectic is at once critical and revolutionary.[5]

With this claim, I also seek to restore the unity of the normative components of Marx's thought with his scientific explanations. The kind of science Marx employs, by his own admission, is "human science."[6] This form of science is philosophical and cannot be reduced to the observation of dry facts. One of its primary motives is to unearth the human predicament in bourgeois society, as well as the material basis of human emancipation this society engenders. At the bottom, Marx's science is one of human emancipation.

Marx's theory of alienation captures various fundamental aspects of the human predicament in bourgeois society.[7] In this sense, Marx's theory of alienation is an evaluative theory that explains why human essence undergoes a process of alienation as dehumanization in capitalism. However, as István Mészáros rightly points out, the concept of alienation also constitutes the "basic idea of the Marxian system," including its explanatory purchase.[8] This is a controversial claim, which I seek to defend and further develop in this book.[9] I attempt to show that the processes of alienation, human alienation to be sure, also explain the formation of bourgeois society, its structure and superstructure. Alienation, thus, is a dialectical process of human realization and negation through which the bourgeois totality is formed.

This reading of Marx seeks to correct a widespread misunderstanding of his materialism. Despite some able efforts to counter it, Marx's materialism is still predominantly associated with thing, or matter, determinism, an approach that explains human beings, their activity, relations, feelings, needs, consciousness, and even the society they live in as epiphenomenal reflections of matter through sense perception.[10] Marx's *presumed* contribution to this form of materialism is the equation of matter with economic factors, such as the forces of production. His materialism is thus equated with the kind of crude "old materialism" Marx himself strenuously opposed. Contrary to this unfounded opinion, this book shows that the most fundamental basis of Marx's materialism is "man and his activity." Since human activity is essentially social, materialism of Marx also, and necessarily, is built upon the social relations of individuals in a given society. Materialism of Marx, dialectically perceived, is thus a form of humanism.

Relatedly, Marx's relationship to Hegel is often reduced to the famous—or infamous to some—claim that Marx turned Hegel right-side-up simply by replacing the latter's Idea with economic matter. The present work devotes much attention to the intellectual debt Marx owed Hegel. It seeks to understand Marx through repeated comparisons and contrasts between his dialectic method and that of Hegel. But it also shows that Marx's inversion of Hegel is based on the inversion of the latter's idealism to dialectical humanist-materialism.

With these arguments, I also offer a rebuttal of nowadays popular analytical Marxism, which sees a distinction between Marx's method and theory, dismisses the dialectic method in favor of analytical philosophy, and explains isolated aspects of Marx's theory analytically.[11] However, even though I believe in the superiority of dialectics over analytical philosophy, the present work does not defend the former against the latter.

It merely demonstrates that various important theories and concepts of Marx are incomprehensible, unless adequate attention is given to his "dialectical investigations."[12] Marx's concepts, theories, and dialectic method are of one piece. Reading him without his dialectic method is like speaking a language without its grammar.

This book neither defends nor criticizes Marx's ideas. It also makes no effort to show their validity and application to today's circumstances or to the past "Communist" experiences. The space constraint imposed on the book barely suffices to explain Marx's philosophical system. I am convinced that the latter task is the more urgent one. Certainly I am not the first to attempt to explain Marx's thought accurately. There are many valuable contributions out there, some of which will be noted throughout the book. Nevertheless, misperceptions still dominate the discourse. Some of them are deliberately fabricated. Some are construed on the basis of past, secondary, inaccurate accounts of Marx's ideas.[13] Some emanate from looking at Marx backward through the prism of the Cold War politics, or the Communist experience in general. Other misperceptions are due to academic careerism, which often imposes on Marx the currently vogue concepts and methods that have little to do with Marx's own.

Marx's ideas have been distorted, and such distortions are overwhelming. In order to minimize the danger of further distorting Marx's ideas, I adopt a strategy of exposition in which I let Marx speak for himself, often with lengthy quotations. Indeed, approximately one-third of the entire book consists of Marx's own words. It seems obvious to me that Marx is the most qualified person to explain his own ideas. The strategy I adopt allows the reader to comprehend Marx beyond what the present author is able to establish on his behalf. It also helps illustrate the continuity in Marx's approach, in contrast to the unfounded claim that Marx departed from the humanist philosophy of his youthful years in favor of scientific materialism—a legend that has become a cottage industry in its own right. Lastly, this strategy is especially necessary in light of the fact that Marx's dialectical arguments often express a complex set of internally related concepts. Taking specific utterances out of their broader context is tantamount to producing one-sided legends. This book, then, along with trying to make a comprehensive sense of Marx's ideas, through his own words, also serves as a legend buster.[14]

This book pursues its main thesis through six chapters. The main thesis, to repeat, is that the concept of human nature is the primary dual standpoint of Marx's philosophical system, which overlaps with the objective totality it seeks to comprehend. Chapter 1 explains how Marx

conceptualizes human nature dialectically as essence and existence. The remaining five chapters demonstrate its application to various important theories proposed by Marx. Chapter 2 explains Marx's general theory of history. Chapter 3 focuses on his dialectical understanding of the structure of societies in general. The main topic of Chapter 4 is the structure of *bourgeois* society. The concept of alienation as an explanatory and critical standpoint is introduced in this chapter, and further utilized in the ensuing chapters. Chapters 5 and 6 explain how the structure "determines" the superstructure. The former focuses on law, justice, and morality, and shows how alienated social relations (structure) in bourgeois society internally explain and thus determine these moments of the superstructure. Chapter 6 is concerned with Marx's theory of the state in bourgeois society from the same vantage point. Another important aim of Chapter 6 is to refute the legend that Marx reduces the state to an instrument of the ruling class, ignoring its autonomy. The broader import of this refutation is that Marx's theory does not reduce the superstructure to a mere epiphenomenon of the structure of society. The Epilogue explains why the theories of revolution and communism are necessary for the completion of Marx's philosophical system.

Each chapter deals with a complex set of issues, including alternative ways of interpreting Marx. By examining six interrelated topics, this book as a whole seeks to restore the unity of Marx's humanism and dialectical-historical materialism, on the one hand, and the unity of his scientific explanation with his critical evaluation, on the other. What the dialectic method does and the manner in which it is utilized by Marx will be illustrated in and through the various Marxian theories discussed in what follows. This mode of articulating Marx's dialectic method follows from his own mode of utilizing it, that is, within the context of his own inquiry and exposition.

The contributions of several people to the completion of this book must be duly acknowledged. My friend Shinasi Rama was instrumental in constantly encouraging me to turn my long-time interest in Marx's philosophy into a book. Bertell Ollman has kept my interest alive through many conversations we have had over the past few years. I have learned a lot from him. Bertell also invited me to present Chapter 2 at the "Marxist Theory Colloquium" he runs at NYU. The participants of this colloquium offered useful comments. The following former students have provided insightful feedback on the earlier drafts of several chapters: Gilad Isaacs, Joe Beaglehole, Gulce Tarhan, Candan Turkkan, Clement Salomon, and, especially, Tyson Patros. I also wish to thank Karen Tang for her invaluable help with typing and probing questions. The anonymous reviewer designated by Palgrave provided a very encouraging and

useful review. Palgrave's editors involved in the production of this book have been diligently helpful. I sincerely thank them all for their help.

Finally, writing this book has helped me understand why authors often acknowledge the contributions of their spouses. I am most grateful to Akiko Tabak, who steadfastly supported, inspired, and encouraged me to complete this work with indescribable generosity, love, and care. This book is dedicated to her.

CHAPTER 1

MARX'S CONCEPTION OF HUMAN NATURE: "IS THERE NO HUMAN NATURE JUST AS THERE IS A UNIVERSAL NATURE OF PLANTS AND STARS?"

1.1 INTRODUCTION

A main thesis pursued in this book is that the concept of human nature plays a crucial role in Marx's entire thought.[1] This concept, however, is not merely epistemological. Rather, its centrality emanates from the ontologically defined objective and subjective realities of the social universe Marx investigates. Marx articulated that this universe is ultimately a process in which humanity objectifies its own subjectivity in a dialectical manner. A main goal of this chapter is to explain this concept in Marx's dialectical terms.

However, defending this thesis adequately requires overcoming a popular obstacle erected by Louis Althusser's reformulation of Marx's thought. Althusser summed up the several key components of his reformulation as follows:

> The untenable thesis upheld by Marx in the *1844 Manuscripts* was that History is the History of the process of alienation of a Subject, the Generic Essence of Man alienated in "alienated labor."

> But it was precisely this thesis that *exploded.* The result of this explosion was the evaporation of the notions of subject, human essence, and alienation, which disappear, completely atomized, and the liberation of the concept of a *process . . . without a subject,* which is the basis of all the analyses in *Capital*.[2]

Althusser's "discovery" proposes a sharp philosophical break between the early and mature Marx, Marx's abandonment of humanism and his concept of human essence in his mature years, and, consequently, Marx's subscription to the concept of "process without a subject," especially in *Capital.* Althusser's reformulation will be critiqued in more detail in the next two chapters. A crucial part of his argument that will concern us in this chapter is Marx's presumed abandonment of the concept of human essence,[3] an argument shared by many others as well.[4]

This chapter rejects this presumption. This rejection is necessary not only for the sake of demonstrating the falsity of the presumption, but also because of its relevance to other presumptions of Marx's philosophy in general. In other words, this chapter contends from the outset that, because the concept of human essence is so foundational, its misapprehension can easily result in the misapprehension of Marx's entire system.

Marx never abandons the notion that human beings have a unique, permanent essence. But he also repeatedly states that "men transform their nature" throughout history and that "[man] is the ensemble of social relations." For some, this constitutes an irresolvable contradiction. Instead of understanding change and permanency in human nature dialectically, they prefer to attribute to Marx the latter. Section 1.2 explains how such a contradiction must be understood in dialectical terms in that essence and change/variation are inherent aspects of the same reality.

A significant portion of this chapter evaluates the "evidence" that presumably supports the opposing interpretations. A very popular "evidence" comes from Marx's "Theses on Feuerbach," especially the sixth thesis. Section 1.3 examines these theses and shows that they do not reject the concept of human essence. Rather, Marx's criticism of Feuerbach in this particular regard is based on Feuerbach's misapprehension of this concept.

Section 1.4 discusses how Marx's criticism of the other prevailing notions of human essence also never amount to his own denial of human essence. Often, Marx criticizes his opponents for abstracting, one-sidedly, the concept of human essence from the bourgeois society. This abstraction, according to Marx, leads them to confuse the isolated individual residing in *this* society with the universal human essence. In contrast, Marx argues that human beings are essentially social beings, and are

always as such although the manifestation of their social essence assumes a variety of forms in different, historically definite, social formations. The social essence is one of the main manifestations of human essence Marx often utilizes for both explanatory and evaluative purposes.

Sections 1.5 and 1.6 explore and explain two other essential human characteristics: human needs and objective activity. In his discussions of all three categories, Marx accounts for both change and permanency, for the general and particularized manifestations of these characteristics. Significantly, these are the three main characteristics that collectively constitute the standpoint of Marx's explanation of history and variation in societies, as well as his criticism of the existing state of affairs. For reasons that will be offered throughout this book, objective activity holds a special status in Marx's dialectical inquiry.

1.2 DIALECTICS OF ESSENCE AND HUMAN NATURE

The concept of human nature is a dialectical composite of essence and existence. According to Marx, human nature changes in terms of both historical transformation and variation from society to society. In his *Critique of the Gotha Program,* he even acknowledges, as anyone must, that each individual is different.[5] However, it is equally true that he remains committed to a conception of human essence throughout his major works. From a dialectical point of view, no logical contradiction exists between these two positions. Understanding this point of view more comprehensively requires outlining the concept of essence in general and the function it plays in determining human nature in particular existence. Beginning briefly with Hegel's notion of essence proves useful in this regard.

The *essence* of something forms its identity, its permanent characteristic(s). It distinguishes it from other things. According to Hegel, "Everything . . . has an Essence" and "there is a permanence in things, and that permanence is in the first instance their Essence." The more complicated aspect of this thought in his dialectics is that the essence of a thing is distinguished from its own mode of appearance, that is, from its own being in existence: "things really are not what they immediately show themselves to be." Essence, then, is the *true* being that stands in an internal and dialectical relationship to its appearance.[6]

Hegel calls the latter type of being the "semblance" of essence, of the *true* being.[7] Thus, as Marcuse explains, essence refers to the true being of something, as opposed to its own semblances, that is, its own "constantly changing multiplicity of appearances."[8] In other words, essence exists in manifold and changing forms along with its own appearances.

Said differently, for Hegel, "appearance and essence are two modes of being which stand in reciprocal relation to one another . . . "[9]

This dialectical notion of "reciprocal" interaction is informed by the theory of subject. The essence is the active subject responsible for the processes of self-determination, of its own particularization and negation in existence. This thought requires us to conceive of essence also as a potentiality, and not an already fully accomplished fact. Popularized first by Aristotle, *potentiality* refers to any intrinsic possibility that a thing has within itself, which is perceived to be a self-actualizing characteristic, something that naturally needs to become more than what it immediately is in its unmediated state. *Actuality*, or the process of actualization, refers to a condition of becoming in which the intrinsic potentiality is realized.[10] This process, in the Hegelian parlance, may be called the objectification of the subject, which already suggests an inherent relationship between the essence and the subject.

The characteristic of essence as a potentiality explains why the essence must mediate and actualize itself in and through nature, a process in which it self-appears in particularized forms.[11] Because of this process of self-actualization, essence is also regarded as the *subject* of motion and transcendence in the Hegelian, and by extension Marxian, dialectic (see Chapter 2).[12] This means that the subject becomes the essence of the phenomenal world in which it actualizes itself by giving this world, the "thing in itself," its essential *identity*. In this sense, essence determines the mediated being. But by becoming concretized in this manner, by determining the mediated being, essence itself becomes particularized and hence determined. It acquires a more concrete, many-sided determination in existence, by appearing in a particularized form.

In Hegel's dialectic, this subject-essence is the Idea (see Chapter 2 for a more elaborate discussion). In Marx's rendition, it is humanity, and objective activity (production, labor, etc.) is the essential human characteristic responsible for the concretization of human essence in and through nature. As discussed throughout this book, all objective and subjective aspects of the social universe, insofar as this universe is the realm of labor's mediation, "[amount] to a mere *concretisation* of human labour . . . ".[13] Human labor constitutes the essence of all aspects of the changing social universe as much as it explains why this change occurs. It follows that the concept of essence plays a crucial role in Marx's dialectical science. Following the Hegelian logic, Marx reminds his readers that "all science would be superfluous if the outward appearance and the essence of things directly coincided."[14] As David Harvey rightly observes throughout his work, Marx utilizes the concept of "appearance" very frequently.[15] Taking forward Harvey's observation, the concept of appearance presupposes the

concept of essence. Appearance, after all, is true being's specific modality in existence.

Both Hegel and Marx think of essence as the general and appearance as the particular. The general always exists in a particularized form and does so as a historical fact. The concept of labor, for instance, which is of paramount importance to Marx's philosophy, "strikingly demonstrates that even the most [generally] abstract categories," for example, "labour as such," "despite their being valid . . . for all epochs, are, in the determinateness of their abstraction, just as much a product of historical conditions and retain their full validity only for and within these conditions."[16] Thus, labor (human activity) always appears in a historical, particular form as, say, slave labor, wage labor, communal labor, and so on, while also being valid for all epochs as an essential human attribute, as labor qua labor. Reversely, this means that all particular forms of labor share something in common, since they are all various historical forms of human activity.

This dialectical thought of Marx warns against the limitations of merely ahistorical, general abstractions, such as "labour as such," precisely because his opponents often *limit* their standpoint of analysis to such universal categories, and mistaken ones at that, thus overlooking their necessary historical specificity in existence. However, the message in the preceding paragraph also serves as a warning to rigid historicism, which wants nothing to do with the concept of universal essence. Labor *as such,* says Marx, is "just as much" valid, and necessary for the determination of the particular. Marx's draft outline for *Capital* tellingly begins with the general determinants of all forms of society, which are crucial for understanding the categories that determine the internal structure of bourgeois society (the particular, historical form).[17] The two, most general determinants that persist throughout history, as Marx often states, are human beings and nature. Therefore, human nature in general, that is, the general, essential human characteristics, is always present in history as Marx conceives of it. Not incidentally, as will be amply demonstrated in the next chapter, Marx's historical materialism utilizes this notion of the general human nature as its primary standpoint.

Marx's formulations of human nature involve different levels of abstraction, ranging from specific individuals, individuals in a given society, individuals in similar societies, to individuals in general.[18] At a more general level, the less particular and contingent becomes the conception of the individual, and vice versa. At the most particular level, each individual appears to be different, even though each is of the same essence as the others. At the most general level, the essential human characteristics hold true for all human beings throughout history. Such characteristics are but various manifestations of universal human essence.[19] At this level, all

individuals are identical, though they are defined through broad generalizations, such as being social creatures and having certain species-specific powers and needs.

In Marx's dialectic, the general and the particular cannot exist independently in reality. But, logically speaking, the general takes precedence in terms of determining the particular. For instance, in his references to particular individuals existing in a particular society, Marx often treats them as largely being determined, or having contingent characteristics. Following is an example of such treatment: "My standpoint, from which the evolution of the economic formation of society is viewed as a process of natural history, can less than any other make the individual responsible for relations whose creature he socially remains, however much he may subjectively raise himself above them."[20] In the overall scheme of things, a particular individual is by and large determined. An individual's own determination of the society in which he or she lives fades in comparison to the totality of the determinations of the being of this individual in his or her existence.

In his discussions of human nature in general, Marx often emphasizes the collective human agency in history; history and society are determined by the productive activity of humankind. Following is an example of such treatment: "history is *nothing but* the activity of man pursuing his aims."[21] Such statements emphasize that humans are collectively the ultimate subject of history. When understood in a more comprehensive manner as a process occurring within the totality of social universe, the following general principle emerges: humans are "the permanent presupposition of human history, likewise its permanent product and result, and he is *presupposition* only as his own product and result."[22]

This latter thought follows directly from Hegel's dialectic of circularity. Marx, paralleling Hegel's logic, believes that humans are both determined and determining. This suggests a dialectical contradiction, which is resolved with two additional dialectical moves: First, the proposition that humans are both determined and determining implies that they are collectively the object and the subject of social and historical processes. This dialectical contradiction requires us to treat these processes as the self-determination of the subject. Second, this dialectical contradiction can exist only as a *process* of self-determination.[23] In other words, the unity of dialectical opposites can exist only in a process of self-determination that is reciprocal and circular. In Marx's rendition, it is the process of reproduction that most effectively captures this circularity. From this follows the notion that humans are ultimately determined by the conditions that they themselves, socially to be sure, set in motion with their own productive activity.

In brief, Marx's conception of human nature *includes* the notion of a universal, permanent human nature, which will also be referred to as *human essence;* this essence explains why human nature is also determined, why it also changes. Human essence may also be viewed as the "inner" nature, which exists in a reciprocal relationship with the external nature in which human beings live and exist. The inner and external natures, together, dialectically constitute the overall human nature. Marx's conception of *human nature,* depending on what he intends to explain, refers to this totality, or to either aspect of it.

Marx's conception of human nature, then, operates on two different, interrelated axes: the axis of the permanent and changing human characteristics and the axis of the inner and external characteristics. The dialectical interaction of the inner and external characteristics sets in motion the interaction of the permanent and changing human characteristics. As these interactions occur, human essence appears in history as its own particularization and as the simultaneous presupposition and result.

The arguments presented in the preceding outline are *a priori* constructions of what still needs to be proven. In the first instance, proving them requires dismantling the legend that Marx had abandoned the concept of human essence after his very early writings.

1.3 Anticipating and Interpreting the "Theses"

According to a number of his interpreters, "Theses on Feuerbach" exhibits the initiation of Marx's rejection of the concept of human essence. For instance, Marx (in Thesis 6) defines the individual as "the ensemble of social relations." In Thesis 7 he declares that the individual "belongs in reality to a particular form of society."[24] The usual conclusion is as follows: Marx holds the view that the individual's nature is determined by changing social relations and material conditions in a given society. These theses, especially the sixth, are interpreted as evidence that Marx rejects the notion that human beings have a universal essence.[25] This haphazard conclusion, or others akin to it, was never proposed by Marx in "Theses" or elsewhere.[26] The only seemingly plausible "proof" for them exists in the form of isolated comments, taken out of their general context.

"Theses" is a set of difficult personal notes intended as an outline for *The German Ideology*. As will be discussed later, the latter work utilizes a conception of general human nature, which suggests that Marx in these "Theses" did not have the intention of dispensing with such a conception of human nature. However, instead of merely reading "Theses" from

the angle of a later work, it would be prudent to also treat it as a result of the development of Marx's ideas that preceded its composition.

Marx had begun penning down "Theses" with some ideas in mind that he had already formulated, not too long before its composition, in partial opposition to Hegel.[27] According to Marx, in the "Critique of Hegel's Philosophy in General,"

> The outstanding achievement of Hegel's *Phänomenologie* and of its final outcome, the dialectic of negativity as the moving and generating principle, is thus first that Hegel conceives the self-creation of man as a process . . . , that he thus grasps the essence of *labour* and comprehends objective man—true, because real man—as the outcome of man's *own labour.*[28]
>
> (A part of this passage, as it shall be quoted later in this chapter, also speaks of the social nature of humans.)

Hegel's "achievement," according to Marx, involves two related concepts: labor as human essence and the dialectic of "negativity" (as the moving principle of the self-actualization of this essence). The dialectic in question here is generated by what Hegel calls the "living substance," which can only be "truly realized and actual solely in the process of positing itself." The process itself is "its own becoming, the circle which presupposes its end as its purpose, and has its end for its beginning, it becomes concrete and actual only by being carried out, and by the end it involves."[29] This dialectical movement, thus, is *transformatively circular,* and reciprocal, based on the self-actualization of the subject's essence.

Marx accepts the validity of this dialectical movement. However, according to him, Hegel's approach is marked by "one-sidedness and limitations." Among them is the fact that Hegel "sees only the positive, and not the negative side of labour" within the process of its own actualization.[30] Because of this, as Marcuse notes, Hegel "makes the claim that the unity of the subject and object has already been consummated and the process of reification overcome . . . and all contradictions are finally reconciled in the realm of thought, or the absolute mind."[31] In other words, Marx's problem with Hegel in this particular regard has much to do with the latter's inability to grasp that the process of negation is still ongoing and involves not only the positive but also the negative actualization of the subject's essence as its alienation (see Chapter 4 for more on the theory of alienation).

Furthermore, this process and the reconciliation of the subject and object cannot be reduced to a thought process. As Marx complains, "The only labour which Hegel knows and recognises is *abstractly mental* labour." Consequently, "the *object of consciousness* is nothing else but

self-consciousness, or that the object is only *objectified self-consciousness*—self-consciousness as object (Positing of man = self-consciousness)." This position leads Hegel to regard humankind "as a *non-objective, spiritual* being" and the process of negation as a non-objective activity. In other words, human essence, and consequently essential human activity, are stripped off of all natural, material, and objective substance. Accordingly, "For Hegel the *human being—man*—equals *self-consciousness.* All estrangement of the human being is therefore *nothing* but *estrangement of self-consciousness.*"[32] As a result, the self-positing "living substance" (essence) is either not human, or when it is, it has no substance (essence) other than the mind.[33]

In contrast, according to Marx, humans are objective beings, and must therefore be involved in objective activity. Marx expresses this idea in the following passage:

> Whenever real, corporeal *man*, man with his feet firmly on the solid ground, man exhaling and inhaling all the forces of nature, *posits* his real, objective *essential powers* as alien objects by his externalisation, it is not the *act of positing* which is the subject in this process: it is the subjectivity of *objective* essential powers, whose action, therefore, must also be something objective. An objective being acts objectively, and he would not act objectively if the objective did not reside in the very nature of his being. He only creates or posits objects, because he is posited by objects—because at bottom he is *nature*. In the act of positing, therefore, this objective being does not fall from his state of "pure activity" into *a creating of the object*; on the contrary, his *objective* product only confirms his *objective* activity, his activity as the activity of an objective, natural being.

This passage constitutes the very foundation of Marx's own version of humanist materialism. He calls his own outlook "naturalism or humanism," which is "distinct from both idealism and materialism, and constitutes at the same time the unifying truth of both."[34] Marx's "naturalism or humanism" thus replaces Hegel's idealism with human as an objective being and also his idealist notion of the active essence of the "living substance" with objective activity, that is, "the subjectivity [agency] of *objective* essential powers." This is to say, humans as objective beings, with objective powers and needs, are collectively the subjects of their own externalization and actualization. Note also that Marx's criticism of Hegel's idealism does not amount to the rejection of idealism, or subjectivity, *tout court*, since he considers his humanist naturalism as the "unifying truth of both" materialism and idealism.

With the same move, Marx also opposes Feuerbach's version of materialism in these early remarks. Even though Marx agrees with Feuerbach's

conclusion that "*Man* alone is the *reality, the subject of reason*"[35] (the truly objective being), Marx ultimately accepts neither the way Feuerbach arrives at this materialist notion nor the way he utilizes it. From Feuerbach's version of materialism arises his misconception of human essence, a central point Marx makes in "Theses."

Before starting a discussion on how this criticism unfolds in "Theses," it would be helpful to have Feuerbach explain his own outlook.[36] In the first part of the following quote, Feuerbach strikes against Hegelian idealism:

> The ideas of my work are only conclusions, *consequences,* drawn from premises which are not themselves mere ideas, but objective facts either actual or historical—facts which had not their place in my head simply in virtue of their ponderous existence in folio. I unconditionally repudiate *absolute*, immaterial, self-sufficing, speculation, that speculation which draws its material from within. I differ *toto coelo* from those philosophers who pluck out their eyes that they may see better . . .

One crucial aspect of how Feuerbach wants us to understand the world is summed up in the word "eyes," which signals his materialism as sense-perception determinism. As he continues,

> (F)or my thought I require the senses, especially sight; I found my ideas on materials which can be appropriated only through the activity of the senses. I do not generate the object from the thought, but the thought from the object; and I hold *that* alone to be an object which has an existence beyond one's own brain.[37]

The part of this passage that Marx specifically opposes in "Theses" is the one Feuerbach also repeats elsewhere,

> *Taken in its reality* or regarded as *real,* the real is the object of the senses—the *sensuous.* Truth, reality, and sensuousness are one and the same thing. Only a sensuous being is a *true and real* being. Only through the senses is an object given *in the true sense,* not through thought *for itself.* The object given by and identical with ideation is merely thought.[38]

It follows from this position, as Marcuse notes, that "Feuerbach's naturalism thus maintains that perception, sensuousness (*Sinnlichkeit*), sensation (*Empfindung*) are the proper organon of philosophy. 'The object, in its true meaning, is given only by the senses'; 'nothing is unquestionably and immediately certain except the object of the senses, of perception and sensation.' "[39]

Feuerbach's sense-perception determinism assumes a passive inner essence of humans. He overlooks, according to Marx, that humans have an active essence and that the objective world, and its historical transformation, itself is the result of objective human activity. In short, unlike Hegel, "Marx resolved the dialectic by reconstructing not thought, but historical social practice itself as a dialectic. He, like Feuerbach, placed thought into its practical social context, but he did so historically, and by way of a fundamental reinterpretation of human praxis as labor."[40] But apart from his opposition to Hegel, Marx did this not on the basis of the Feuerbachian "activity of the senses" but on the basis of "praxis as labor," as objective activity.

Given these thoughts on Hegel and Feuerbach, Marx begins his "Theses on Feuerbach" with the following criticism (Thesis 1):

> The chief defect of all hitherto existing materialism—that of Feuerbach included—is that the thing, reality, sensuousness, is conceived only in the form of the *object or of contemplation*, but not as *sensuous human activity, practice*, not subjectively. Hence, in contradistinction to materialism, the *active* side was developed abstractly by idealism—which, of course, does not know real, sensuous activity as such. Feuerbach wants sensuous objects, really distinct from the thought objects, but he does not conceive human activity itself as *objective* activity.[41]

Marx's notion of "human activity," as depicted in the preceding quote, is the ultimate basis of criticizing Feuerbach in this thesis. This criticism involves Marx's understanding of what is *human* and what is human *activity*, the "active side" of humans. These terms are inseparable from one another since sensuous, objective activity is the species-specific manner in which humans posit and actualize themselves and since the notion of human can be properly conceived only through this activity. When Marx discusses "human activity," or "objective activity," he necessarily has in mind an essential attribute of human essence. This attribute highlights the active subjectivity of human beings instead of reducing them to passive, merely determined beings, as it is with Feuerbach.

If the criticism of idealism and "existing materialism" in the first thesis is based on a conception of active human essence, could it be true, as it is often assumed, that the sixth thesis refutes such a conception completely several paragraphs later in the same text? A close examination reveals otherwise. Marx says in Thesis 6, "Feuerbach resolves the essence of religion into the essence of *man*." This is because (Thesis 7) "Feuerbach . . . does not see that the 'religious sentiment' is itself a social product . . . " This does not mean that there is no human essence, but rather that the religious

sentiment is *not* to be confused with the essence of humans. Religious contemplation in Marx's own rendition of it is an acquired, contingent human characteristic that arises from human alienation, that is, from the lack of true realization of human essence. Religion is, as Marx puts it elsewhere, "the *fantastic realisation* of the human essence since the *human essence* has no true reality."[42] The same thesis also claims that "the abstract individual he analyses belongs to a particular form of society." Marx's point here is clearly a reference to Feuerbach's version of human essence, which is derived from the isolated individual, who, according to Marx, is living in a particular society with particular religious yearnings. Feuerbach, like some other materialists, thus abstracts the general nature of human beings merely from the particular *existence* of individuals in bourgeois society. Marx rejects *this* conception of universal essence, and not human essence in general.

According to Marx, yet another related mistake is involved in Feuerbach's abstraction. Marx corrects this mistake in Thesis 6: "essence of man is no abstraction inherent in each single individual." If the "essence of man is no abstraction inherent in each single individual," then what is the essence of man? Marx famously answers, "In its reality it is the ensemble of social relations." Clearly, since this statement follows the previous statement, "it" refers to the "essence of man." The sentence that follows "it" clarifies that Feuerbach's mistake stems from not entering "upon a criticism of this real essence." Thus, the sentence should be read as *in its reality the essence of man is the ensemble of social relations*.

Admittedly, Marx's reference to human essence as "the ensemble of social relations" appears to be paradoxical. A very plausible explanation, offered by Geras, is that the German word "wesen," which is used by Marx in this context, can accommodate both essence and acquired characteristics of human nature; in the case of being "the ensemble of social relations," Marx has in mind the latter meaning. But the point is that being in part "the ensemble of social relations" does not necessarily mean that there is no human essence and that humans are *merely* a composite of acquired social relations. As Marx says in the same thesis, "The essence therefore can by him *only* be regarded as 'species', as an inner 'dumb' generality which unites many individuals only in a natural way" (italics on "only" added). In other words, the sixth thesis criticizes Feuerbach "for a one-sidedness of perspective rather than wrong *tout court*."[43] Marx's understanding of human nature assumes the unity of the inner self with the external, material world, which is often described by Marx as the social relations of individuals.[44] This unity results from essential, practical, social, human activity, which Feuerbach does not recognize (Thesis 1).

Remarkably, the third thesis says, "The materialist doctrine that men are products of circumstance and upbringing, and that, therefore, changed men are products of other circumstances and changed upbringing, forgets that it is men who change circumstances . . . "[45] In other words, Marx rejects the reduction of human beings to material circumstances, to a "dumb generality." On the basis of this criticism, Marx states the first premise of humanist historical materialism: "All mysteries which lead theory to mysticism find their rational solution in human practice and in the comprehension of this practice" (Thesis 8). This first premise is further expounded upon in *The German Ideology*, discussed in the next chapter. Thus, Marx accepts that "men are products of their circumstances." He does not accept the claim, however, that they are merely such products.

Returning to the relationship between human essence and human nature as "the ensemble of social relations," the following line of thought, expressed elsewhere, helps us better understand Marx's intentions in the "Theses," especially the sixth thesis: "Society does not consist of [isolated] individuals," says Marx, "but expresses the sum of the relationships and conditions in which these individuals stand to one another." To say that society consists of individuals as such means that "for society, slaves and CITIZENS do not exist; both are men" From this vantage point, the particular, acquired, social characteristics of individuals would be obscured. From the perspective of a particular society, individuals are thus the ensemble of social relations; that is, they are the sum of their social relations. This means that in a given society, individuals obtain social characteristics through their relations with one another and cannot be reduced to mere individuals: "To be a slave and to be a CITIZEN are social determinations, relations between human beings A and B." However, this does not mean that A and B are not also human beings: "Human being A, as such, is not a slave. He is a slave in and through society." So human being "as such," human *qua* human, always acquires social characteristics in a given society. In order to abstract the general concept of human "as such," one must abstract from "outside society," that is, outside a particular society, which involves abstracting from all history, all forms of society.[46] As will be discussed later in this chapter, Marx often performs this form of general abstraction.

In the absence of such an abstraction, as Thesis 9 states, "The highest point reached by contemplative materialism," including Feuerbach's version, "is the contemplation of single individuals and of civil society." This thesis poses two distinctive problems, already discussed earlier in the chapter: the isolated individual who lives in bourgeois society, for civil society is the synonym of bourgeois society, and the individual as

a one-sided inner self. In other words, Feuerbach's individual is derived only from the present and from isolated individuals. With this move, Feuerbach's materialism conflates all history and humanity throughout history to the present. In effect, it becomes ahistorical.[47] One main point of Marx's historical account, of historical materialism, is to set the record straight on human nature by providing a general vantage point from all of history, from all forms of society. Feuerbach is not the only target of Marx's criticism in this regard.

1.4 MAN IS A SOCIAL BEING: CRITICISM OF THE THEORY OF ISOLATED INDIVIDUAL

Marx's criticism of the modern, materialist theories of human nature is based on a problem he also considers in "Theses": the problem of (mis)abstraction, from which results the conflation of all societies to civil society, and consequently the conflation of the general human nature to the particular individual, the "isolated individual" who lives in this society. However, his criticism is regularly accompanied by a different theory of general human nature, which is abstracted from history in general (Marx also frequently arrives at the general conception of human beings through the classical method of comparing them to other species). His theory of the general human nature (essence), among other aspects that will be discussed in this book, is based on the claim that humans are essentially social beings; this theory should not be confused with the notion that humans are also "the ensemble of social relations." Marx makes these arguments in both his early and mature writings.

The claim that the early Marx conceived humans to be essentially social beings, that is, to have a social essence, should not be controversial. Commenting further on Hegel's significant achievements discussed earlier in this chapter, Marx says, "The *real, active* orientation of man to himself as a species-being, or his manifestation as a real species-being (i.e., as a human being), is only possible if he really brings out all his *species-powers*—something which in turn is only possible through the cooperative action of all of mankind." Marx's point here is based on the "active" and "cooperative" (social) essence of humans as a *potentiality*, which can be actualized in fuller scope only through the cooperative "action of all of mankind." This fuller, or fullest, actualization may be obtained "only as the result of history."[48] Nevertheless, human action is always and necessarily social, that is, based on cooperation and a certain kind of division of labor.

In the same early manuscripts, Marx tells us more:

> The individual *is the social being.* His manifestations of life—even if they may not appear in the direct form of *communal* manifestations of life

> carried out in association with others—are therefore an expression and confirmation of *social life*. Man's individual and species-life [social life] are not *different,* however much—and this is inevitable—the mode of existence of the individual is a more *particular* or more *general* mode of the life of the species, or the life of the species is a more *particular* or more *general* individual life.[49]

This passage reiterates the social being of the individual, which inevitably manifests itself simultaneously as the particular and the general mode of existence. In a sense, this passage also serves as a warning for us not to reduce the general mode of existence to the particular mode.

Marx, in a much later work, follows up on this warning. His explanation, in terms of both its method and conclusions, directly agrees with the position he takes in the *Manuscripts* and with his criticism of Feuerbach in "Theses":

> The individual and isolated hunter and fisherman, who serves Adam Smith and Ricardo as a starting point, is one of the unimaginative fantasies of the 18th century . . . No more is Rousseau's *contrat social*, which by means of a social contract establishes a relationship and connection between subjects that are by nature INDEPENDENT, based on this kind of naturalism. This is an illusion and nothing but the aesthetic illusion of the small and big Robinsonades. It is, rather, the anticipation of "bourgeois society," which began to evolve in the 16th century and was making giant strides toward maturity in the 18th. In this society of free competition the individual seems to be rid of the natural, etc., ties which in earlier historical epochs made him an appurtenance of a particular, limited aggregation of human beings. The prophets of the 18th century, on whose shoulders Smith and Ricardo were still standing completely, envisaged this 18th-century individual . . . as an ideal whose existence belonged to the past. They saw this individual not as an historical result, but as the starting point of history; not as something evolving in the course of history, but posited by nature, because for them this individual was the natural individual, according to their idea of human nature. This delusion has been characteristic of every epoch hitherto.[50]

He concludes this discussion a few pages later in the same text: "*bourgeois* relations are . . . quietly substituted as irrefutable natural laws of society in *abstracto*."[51]

The following lines from the quote warrant further explanation: "They saw this individual not as an historical result, but as the starting point of history; not as something evolving in the course of history, but posited by nature . . . " For reasons that parallel Marx's critique of Feuerbach in "Theses," this passage does not support the claim that Marx reduces all aspects of human nature to a product of historical change. Certainly,

Marx treats the individual as a progressive, "evolving" being, which itself bespeaks of human essence as a potentiality. Marx's emphasis, however, is on *"this"* individual who is the product of and evolved in the course of history, that is, on the particular human nature in bourgeois society.

In fact, a few pages before writing these lines, Marx offers an abstraction of human nature in general in contrast to *this* particular individual. Importantly, he offers his version of the individual as "the starting point of history" (in the sense of being the logical *first premise*, which informs the concept of the universal human nature), in contrast to *this* individual who is a "historical product" (in the sense of being the particular, historical manifestation of the universal in existence):

> The further back we go into history, the more does the individual, and accordingly also the producing individual, appear to be dependent and belonging to a larger whole . . . It is not until the 18th century, in "bourgeois society," that the various forms of the social nexus confront the individual as merely a means towards his private ends, as external necessity. But the epoch which produces this standpoint, that of the isolated individual, is precisely the epoch of the hitherto most highly developed social (according to this standpoint, general) relations. Man is a (*zoon politikon*) in the most literal sense: he is not only a social animal, but an animal that can isolate itself only within a society.[52]

Marx reiterates here that human beings are essentially social animals. "Going back" in history confirms this, so does capitalist "civil society" even when it produces "isolated" individuals. Even isolation in bourgeois society is a proof of the generally social nature of humans. In fact, the particular must stand as such a proof in order for the general to count as a general.

1.5 HUMAN NEEDS AND POWERS

This section and the next will focus on two key concepts through which Marx further understands and utilizes the concept of human nature, in addition to the social nature of humans already discussed: needs and objective activity, respectively. The concept of need[53] (sometimes also called "want" by Marx) reveals a good deal about Marx's conception of human nature. It provides a useful vantage point from which human nature can be understood as a composite of essence and changing existence. It also explains why the actualization of the inner essence through objective activity must occur.

In Marx's usage, the concept of need contains several different categories: natural needs, socially created needs, refined/luxury needs,[54] and even radical needs. Some needs emanate directly from human essence.

They are species-specific needs of humans. As such, they are unique to human beings. Free, conscious activity (objective activity), as will be discussed later in the chapter, is one such *human* need. Other types of needs are also general human needs necessary for human survival throughout history, but are shared by other species as well, for example, food and shelter. Some needs are historically and socially introduced objects of want or are modified expressions of the natural ones. Every need has a corresponding power, and it is recognized and fulfilled through the latter's assertion.[55]

The relationship between human powers and needs is indispensable for comprehending Marx's dialectic. Having needs, or being inherently needy, explains why there is self-assertion of human powers, why there is objective activity. According to Feuerbach, "Where there is *no limit*, *no time* and *no need*, there is also *no quality*, *no energy*, *no spirit*, *no fire*, and *no love*. Only that being which *suffers* from need (notleidend) is the *necessary* (notwendig) being. Existence *without need* is *superfluous* existence. Whatever is absolutely free from needs has no need for existence."[56] Following Feuerbach on this score, Marx claims that "Neither Nature objectively nor nature subjectively is directly given in a form adequate to the *human* being." Human beings are thus a "suffering, conditioned and limited creature." Since they are not satisfied within, they have needs, which are objects "outside" them. For example, "*Hunger* is a natural *need*; it therefore needs a *nature* outside itself, in order to satisfy itself, to be stilled." In other words, "the *objects* of his instincts exist outside of him, as *objects* independent of him; yet these objects are *objects* that he needs—essential *objects*, indispensable to the manifestation and confirmation of his powers."[57]

The process of need satisfaction is not simply a matter of obtaining from nature what is missing within. It also denotes the assertion of human powers through self-will. The process of need satisfaction, then, is the one in which the objectification of the human subject occurs; it is a process in which the external nature and the inner nature come to form a dialectical unity, which, in Marxian terms, is the unity of human essence and existence, that is, of human nature in its totality.

In *The German Ideology*, Marx offers a historical abstraction—as generalization—in order to conceptualize human nature in three simultaneous and permanent moments that revolve around the concept of need satisfaction. The satisfaction of needs, again, is always tied to the assertion of human powers, or is a process in which such assertions amount to the objective activity of an objective, natural being.

> The first premise of all human existence, and, therefore, of all history . . . (is that) men must be in a position to live in order to be able to "make history."

> But life involves before everything else eating and drinking, housing, clothing and various other things. The first historical act is thus the production of the means to satisfy these needs, the production of the material life itself . . . Therefore, in conception of history one has first of all to observe this fundamental fact in all its significance and all its implications and to accord it its due importance . . .

Significantly, the fact of having needs, being a "suffering being," constitutes a standpoint on the basis of which the dialectical unfolding of history is explained. This leads Marx to the second point: "The second point is that the satisfaction of the first need, the action of satisfying, and the instruments of satisfaction which has been acquired, leads to new needs; and this production of new needs is the first historical act . . . " The "action of satisfying" needs and objective activity and acquiring the instruments of need satisfaction themselves provide a similar standpoint, which explains history. To reiterate, the manner in which these acts occur is uniquely human, as will be explained later in this chapter. However, it should also be noted that history embodies changing needs and the changing manner in which they are satisfied.[58]

Following is Marx's third point: "The third circumstance which, from the very outset, enters into historical development, is that men, who daily remake their own life, begin to make other men, to propagate their kind: the relation between man and woman, parents and children, the *family* . . . " Marx's clarification of how one must understand these three aspects of activity and need satisfaction is of paramount significance: "These three aspects of social activity are not of course to be taken as three different stages, but just as three aspects or . . . three 'moments', which have existed simultaneously since the dawn of history . . . and which still assert themselves in history today . . . "[59]

The simultaneous existence since the "dawn" of history of these three "moments" shows that there is a general human nature, a permanency within the *modus operandi* and *vivendi* of humankind, that, by their nature, human beings are permanently social, and that they actively and collectively create/produce the objects of their needs as well as the means by which they produce these objects. These simultaneous moments collectively constitute the "first point of history." This standpoint is a logical point of departure, and not a "different stage" from which humanity has long ago departed. For this reason, it constitutes the essential reality of all epochs, and hence also the general nature of humans, since it is manifested in all modes of production in various, particular ways. (An important side note to these formulations, discussed and explained further in Chapter 3, is that the first premise in Marx's dialectic should be perceived as a logical

first premise, and not as a first stage in history out of which other elements evolve. Different moments of the human totality exist together "simultaneously.")

Moreover, human needs are both permanent and historically, socially modified, as are human powers and the manner of asserting them. This means that human nature is also permanent and modified. As Marx tells us also in *Capital*,

> His natural wants, such as food, clothing, fuel and housing, vary according to the climatic and other physical conditions of his country. On the other hand, the number and extent of his so-called necessary wants, as also the modes of satisfying them, are themselves the product of historical development, and depend therefore to a great extent on the degree of civilization of a country, more particularly on the conditions under which, and consequently on the habits and degree of comfort . . . [60]

On a similar note, Marx writes elsewhere, repeating the same example of hunger, "Hunger is hunger, but hunger that is satisfied by cooked meat eaten with knife and fork differs from hunger that devours raw meat with the help of hands, nails, and teeth. Production thus produces not only the object but also the manner of consumption, not only objectively but also subjectively."[61] Humans, in the act of satisfying their needs, transform themselves both objectively and subjectively. They determine themselves, and in this sense, they are the presupposition and the result, the object and the subject, of history. Moreover, the development of the forces of production, while creating the *ability* to satisfy more and more needs, also simultaneously coincides with the growth of new needs,[62] which then bring about further growth of humankind's powers and transformation.

Furthermore, needs are also qualitatively and quantitatively socially determined:

> A house may be large or small; as long as the neighboring houses are likewise small, it satisfies all social demands for a dwelling. But let a palace arise beside the little house, and it shrinks from a little house to a hut. The little house shows now that its owner has only very slight or no demands to make; and however high it may shoot up in the course of civilisation, if the neighbouring palace grows to an equal or even greater extent, the occupant of the relatively small house will feel more and more uncomfortable, dissatisfied, and cramped within its four walls.[63]

Nevertheless, regardless of the social character and the level and manner of the appropriation of the objects of need, a human being must always obtain from nature food and shelter, but this cannot be done unless some human labor has been performed.

To conclude, this section emphasizes not only that human beings have certain essential needs but also that being essentially needy is the reason why there is objective activity, history, and the self-actualization of humans in and through nature. The self-transformation of humans, or their needs, does not contradict the fact that humans have needs that they satisfy socially through their activity and that some of these needs define the general human nature. Free, objective activity, through which needs are satisfied, is certainly one such essential *human* need.

1.6 Objective Activity, Human Powers, and Self-Transformation

Besides all the obvious needs, such as food, shelter, and so forth, or because of their persistence throughout history in various objective and subjective forms, labor, that is objective activity, "is a necessary condition, independent of all forms of society, for the existence of the human race; it is an eternal nature-imposed necessity, without which there can be no material exchanges between man and Nature, and therefore no life."[64] This natural inclination, the "nature-imposed necessity," demonstrates general human nature (necessary characteristic as essence). Thus, labor, which Marx identifies with objective activity, as Heller also argues, itself "is one of the greatest needs of man."[65] This activity, as Marx says, exists eternally. After all, despite Marx's criticism of eternal concepts and ideas, it would be a mistake to think that he rejects the eternally existing, necessary human characteristics as general historical facts.

A key question to consider is, what kind of labor (objective activity) is uniquely human? In answering this question, Marx, besides historical abstraction, often derives human essence from the distinguishing characteristics of humans as opposed to animals, producing the same conclusions as the ones from his historical abstractions. He explains this in his *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*:

> The animal is immediately one with its life-activity. It does not distinguish itself from it. It is *its life-activity*. Man makes his life-activity itself the object of his will and of his consciousness. He has conscious life-activity. It is not a determination with which he directly merges. Conscious life-activity distinguishes man immediately from animal life-activity. It is just because of this that he is a species being. Or it is only because he is a species being that he is a Conscious Being, i.e., that his own life is an object for him. Only because of that is his activity free activity.[66]

Something akin to this thought also appears in *Capital*. Again, the distinction between human and animal activity is Marx's method of deriving

uniquely *human* activity, as opposed to "those primitive instinctive forms of labour that remind us of the mere animal . . . "

> We pre-suppose labour in a form that stamps it as exclusively human. A spider conducts operations that resemble those of a weaver, and a bee puts to shame many an architect in the construction of her cells. But what distinguishes the worst architect from the best of bees is this, that the architect raises his structure in imagination before he erects it in reality. At the end of every labour-process, we get a result that already existed in the imagination of the labourer at its commencement. He not only effects a change of form in the material on which he works, but he also realizes a purpose of his own that gives the law to his *modus operandi*.[67]

If one wants to understand Marx's dialectical theory of praxis, that is, his dialectical-materialist theory of the unity of consciousness and activity, one must reread this passage. This issue will be repeatedly discussed in the ensuing chapters.

This comment on human labor as objective activity is an example of Marx's "high levels of abstraction," prevalent in *Capital*, Vol. 1.[68] This activity is,

> in the first place, a process in which both man and Nature participate, and in which man of his own accord starts, regulates and controls the material reactions between himself and Nature. He opposes himself to Nature as one of her own forces, setting in motion arms and legs, head and hands, the natural forces of his body, in order to appropriate Nature's productions in a form adapted to his own wants (needs). By thus acting on external world and changing it, he at the same time changes his own nature. He develops his own slumbering powers and compels them to act in obedience to his sway.

The development of human powers and the use of such powers according to one's own "sway" are uniquely human. Only humans develop and transform themselves in the conscious act of satisfying their needs. Marx claims that a human being in this process "changes his own nature"; this does not mean that humans have no general nature independent of any given society or material conditions. Indeed, before making these comments, Marx says he considered "the labor process independently of the particular form it assumes under given social conditions." This general character of labor, since it is *general*, holds true in capitalism also. Accordingly, "The fact that the production of use values, or goods, is carried on under the control of a capitalist and on his behalf, does not alter the general character of that production."[69] Nevertheless, the particular character

of production changes throughout history, though only as a result of its general character. The general and the particular character of production as human activity coexist in all forms of society, as will be further discussed in Chapter 3.

The development of the general as the particular thus brings about the self-transformation of humans. As Marx explains in his preparatory notes to *Capital*,

> In the act of reproduction itself are changed not only the objective conditions—e.g. village becomes city, the wilderness becomes cultivated clearings, etc.—but also the producers, who transform themselves in that they evolve new qualities from within themselves, develop through production new powers and new ideas, new modes of intercourse, new needs, and new speech.[70]

To reiterate, the phrase "men change their nature" primarily means they "transform themselves in that they evolve new qualities from within themselves," by developing their essential powers. In this sense, the transformation of human nature implies the development of essence as a potentiality. In doing so, humans also change their culture ("ideas, new modes of intercourse, new needs and new speech"). The latter aspects become the contingent parts of human nature, though humans still retain their essential, necessary nature.

It also follows from this view that in each particular society, the *existence* of the individuals coincides with the way in which they assert themselves, in which their essence has taken a particularized determination. It is with this consideration in mind that Marx's following famous comment in *The German Ideology* should be interpreted: "As individuals express their life, so they are. What they are therefore coincides with their production, both with what they produce and *how* they produce. Hence what individuals are depends on the material conditions determining their production."[71] But this reference to individuals' acquired nature itself follows from their essential nature. Marx says so just before penning down these lines.[72] Thus, this passage cannot imply that there is no general human nature.

Ultimately, it may be stated with great certainty that when Marx says what individuals are "therefore coincides with their production, both with what they produce and *how* they produce," he has in mind a dialectical circle whose first premise and ultimate result is human. Following is one of the clearest formulations of this:

> Man himself is the basis of his material production, as of any other production that he carries on. All circumstances, therefore, which affect man,

> the *subject* of production, *plus ou moins*, modify all his functions and activities, and therefore too his functions and activities as the creator of material wealth . . . In this respect it can in fact be shown that *all* human relations and functions, however and in whatever form they may appear, influence material production and have a more or less decisive influence on it.[73]

Material production, which changes the nature of humans, is thus itself a product of "all human relations and functions." Once again, this confronts us with a dialectical explanation of human essence and existence, of the determination of the latter, in the final analysis, by the former.

1.7 Conclusion

Marx's conception of human nature, as the dialectical unity of essence and appearance in existence, envisions a being whose essential characteristics explain his or her own self-transformation. This implies that there is human nature in general (human essence) and human nature in particular (contingent, historically modified existence). As Marx sums it up in his criticism of Bentham,

> To know what is useful for a dog, one must study dog-nature. This nature is not to be deduced from the principle of utility. Applying this to man, he that would criticise all human acts, movements, relations, etc., by the principle of utility, must first deal with human nature in general, and then with human nature as historically modified in each epoch. Bentham makes short work of it. With the driest naiveté he takes the modern shopkeeper . . . as the normal man. Whatever is useful to this queer normal man, and to his world, is absolutely useful.[74]

Besides the obvious fact that Marx accepts the notion of general human nature in a "mature" work, this passage establishes an easy formula for us to understand Marx's approach. Marx refers to "human nature" both in the "historically modified" and in the "in general" sense because he conceives human nature as the dialectical unity of both.

Moreover, the discussion in this chapter has come a full circle back to Marx's "Theses on Feuerbach," and a bit more. Like Feuerbach, Bentham, another materialist, confuses the particular, historically modified individual for humans in general and uses it as his standpoint ("yard-measure") for developing social measures. Marx does not dismiss the notion of having and using human essence as the standpoint. In fact, in his preceding comment against Bentham, he advocates it, as he also does in his criticism of Feuerbach in "Theses." From one angle of this standpoint, Marx in Thesis 10 declares that "The standpoint of old materialism

is civil society," and his own standpoint "is *human* society, or social humanity."[75]

These remarks answer and take us beyond the following question Marx rhetorically asks in a very early work: "Is there no human nature just as there is a universal nature of plants and stars?"[76] The significance of the answer he gives throughout his career goes beyond the affirmative answer he repeatedly formulates. The concept of universal human nature provides him also with a standpoint of explanation, evaluation, and criticism, as his comment against Bentham clearly indicates. Thus, the more important question for us to explore is not so much whether or not Marx has such a conception of general human nature—which he certainly does—but why he has it, what it entails, and how he utilizes it as his standpoint. The remainder of this book attempts to answer these questions.

CHAPTER 2

HISTORICAL MATERIALISM: GENERAL THEORY OF HISTORY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

A very common and legitimate belief is that Marx's explanation of history and society should be called *historical materialism.* Commonly, scholars equate historical materialism and dialectical materialism, though some believe these to be two different philosophical outlooks. These differences of interpretation stem partly from how one perceives the *material* in Marx's materialism and partly from how this material is perceived to figure in his theory of history and society.[1] This chapter will use the term *historical materialism* to mean "the materialist conception of history" proposed by Marx, and will explain how it is based on humanist dialectics.

Historical materialism encompasses four interrelated but distinctive themes: the general theory of history, different social formations (modes of production), revolutionary transitions from one mode of production to the other, and the *potential* society of the future. This chapter mainly explores the first theme, that is, Marx's general theory of history, by attempting to answer four questions, the first three of which are as follows: What is, if any, the first premise (the primacy thesis) of Marx's theory of history? What is the *material* of historical *materialism*? Does this theory assume a historical subject?

All these three questions have one unified answer—as it should be in any coherent philosophy—derived from the concept of human nature. What holds true for all of history is the fact that human beings socially produce the products and instruments of their subsistence in order to

satisfy their needs. Thus, the first premise of historical materialism are human beings and their productive activity, which is based on the notion that humanity is the active subject and object of history and it is the active human subject-object that constitutes the *material* essence of Marx's historical materialism. This first premise also primarily explains the form different societies take (see Chapter 3).

The fourth question that must be answered in the context of Marx's general theory of history is, does Marx subscribe to a teleological view of history? Ultimately, Marx's approach to history *does not* inherit the main tenets of the Hegelian teleological view with which it is often associated. By departing from the Hegelian teleology, Marx also departs from Hegel's noncritical attitude toward history and society. Marx's dialectical interpretation of history is critical revolutionary. Through criticism, unlike Hegel, he projects forward an alternative historical stage, that is, communism. Thus, Marx's philosophy of history includes a theory of the future, a nonteleological telos, so to speak.

2.2 THE STATUS OF THE HISTORICAL SUBJECT: A CRITIQUE OF ALTHUSSER

Most explanations of Marx's historical materialism begin with differentiating his philosophy from Hegel's dialectical idealism. Unfortunately, an overwhelming majority of these interpretations are based on a limited understanding of Marx's brief statement that, with Hegel, the dialectic "is standing on its head. It must be turned right side up again."[2] The next section will explain what this inversion meant to Marx.

What this inversion does *not* mean was aptly captured by Althusser through his study of Lenin, or by Lenin as he was understood by Althusser. This "means that Lenin read Hegel by 'inverting' him." Lenin performed this inversion by reading Hegel through Marx's *Capital.* For Althusser, this "inversion" is a way of not only understanding Marx, but also correcting Hegel's dialectic, that is, transforming it from dialectical idealism into dialectical materialism.[3] Lenin's reading of Hegel through Marx's *Capital* and his subsequent "inversion of idealism into materialism" lead to the following conclusion, according to Althusser:

> In practice this means *not* that Lenin put matter in place of the Idea and *vice versa,* for that would merely produce a new materialist metaphysics (i.e. a materialist variant of classic philosophy, say, at best a mechanistic materialism), but that for his reading of Hegel, Lenin adopted a proletarian *class viewpoint* (a dialectical-materialist viewpoint), which is something quite different.

> In other words, Lenin did not read Hegel in order to set Hegel's absolute-idealist system back on to its feet in the form of a materialist system. For his reading of Hegel he adopted a new philosophical *practice,* which followed the proletarian class viewpoint, i.e. from the dialectical-materialist viewpoint.[4]

Following this conclusion, Althusser suggests that dialectical materialism is not a new philosophy, but one that offers a "new practice" of intervention based on the proletarian class perspective.[5] The concern here is not the last conclusion Althusser obtains on behalf of Marx via Lenin, except that the "proletarian class viewpoint," a particular historical phenomenon, is not the basis of Marx's general theory of history, society, or philosophy. In fact, Marx considers class interests as an aspect of alienation existing in a historically definite, particular society.[6]

However, Althusser is correct in stating that the inversion of Hegel by Marx is not the simple inversion of idealism into mechanistic materialism, based on the inversion of Idea with matter. What, then, remains of the Hegelian dialectic? Althusser says Lenin, who is "so fascinated by the Absolute Idea," takes the Absolute and drops the Idea. Althusser attributes this move to both Marx and Lenin. Given these comments, one expects Althusser to say that the Marxist-Leninist Absolute is the "proletarian viewpoint," which would have been a mistake anyway, and it is on the basis of this absolute that the Marxist philosopher practices intervention, that is, intervenes in the existing processes. But Althusser has something else in mind:

> Lenin takes from Hegel the following proposition: there is only one thing in the world which is absolute, and that is the method or the concept of the process, itself absolute. And as Hegel himself suggested by the beginning of Logic, being = nothingness, and by the very place of Logic, origin negated as origin, Subject negated as Subject, Lenin finds in it a confirmation of the fact that it is absolutely essential . . . *to suppress every origin and every subject, and to say*: what is absolute is the *process without a subject,* both in reality and in scientific knowledge.[7]

Clearly, in Hegel's philosophy, as will be discussed, there is no process without a subject.[8] What is not clear in this passage is whether Althusser thinks Hegel did not have a theory of subject, or whether Lenin destroyed it with the elimination of the Idea. Regardless, the "Marxist-Leninist" dialectic is summed up by Althusser in four words: "process without a subject," which suppresses "every origin and every subject."[9]

Althusser cannot quite reconcile the thesis of "process without a subject" with the lesson he draws from Marx that the masses *make* history,

since he denies the subject but also holds on to a notion of revolutionary subject (masses/proletariat) in the same context.[10] The most basic problem with Althusser's interpretation in this context is the following: He perceives correctly that dialectic involves process and change, and that matter as such cannot be the ultimate basis of the dialectic. However, as discussed in Chapter 1, since Althusser rejects Marx's humanism, and thus also the concept of human subject as a juvenile mistake, he is left with nothing with which to explain the dialectical process. One of the cardinal rules of the Hegelian dialectic in general, and Marx's dialectic of society and history in particular, is that there is no dialectical process without a subject, be it god, Idea, human being, or some form of energy. Anyone who is enamored with the dialectical process of change is also obligated to identify—to use an Aristotelian expression—the *efficient cause* of movement.

Elsewhere, in response to criticism, Althusser modifies his position with regard to human subject. According to his revised but less known view, the humanist conception assumes that "social relations are relations which only involve *men,* whereas they actually also involve things . . . Naturally, human individuals are parties to this relation, therefore active, but first of all in so far as they are held within it."[11] This depiction of humanism, if applied to the young Marx, does not have any validity. The young Marx does not reject the claim that human beings are active within the material structures and that they are also "held within" them. In fact, the young Marx says exactly the same thing, as discussed in the previous chapter: "An objective being acts objectively, and he would not act objectively if the objective did not reside in the very nature of his being. He only creates or posits objects, because he is posited by objects—because at bottom he is *nature.*"[12] The opposition Althusser generates against the early, humanist Marx's notion of the human subject is thus simply a myth. The humanist position proposed in this passage is the basis of Marx's materialism, historical and dialectical, young and mature.

However, Althusser's point that dialectical materialism does not "put matter in place of the Idea and *vice versa*" is a legitimate response to other prevailing interpretations of Marx. As the next chapter will discuss in some detail, G. A. Cohen and George V. Plekhanov, among others, do exactly that by placing forces of production (as things) in place of the Hegelian Idea. Our concern here, however, is what replaces the Absolute Idea in Marx's dialectic, or what Marx's inversion of Hegel involves. Showing that human nature replaces the Hegelian Idea will simultaneously oppose the notion of "process without a subject" and the mechanistic historical materialism as *materialism,* both of which are falsely attributed to Marx.

2.3 Hegel's Philosophy and the Historical Subject

In order to explain how Marx's materialist dialectic differs from Hegel's, to asses what Marx's flipping of Hegel right-side-up means, we begin with a very brief analysis of Hegel's philosophy in general and his philosophy of history in particular.

Stated briefly (and with oversimplification), Hegel's philosophy is based on three propositions. First, philosophy is only idealism, which does not "recognize finitude as a veritable being, as something ultimate and absolute or as something underived, uncreated eternal."[13] The most direct target of this proposition is the pantheist philosophy, which derives god, the absolute, from the finitude, nonveritable world.[14] Second, the inherent aim of philosophy is to realize idealism. This aim of philosophy overlaps with the aim of history, which is the self-realization of the Idea.[15] With this proposition, Hegel targets materialism.[16] Third, the realization of idealism necessarily leads to the rejection of the thought that the "finite reality still retains an independent self-subsistence along-side the being-for-itself."[17] This proposition most directly opposes the Kantian dualism, which assumes that the "thing in itself" (noumenon) exists independently alongside the thing-for-itself.[18]

Hegel sought to overcome the concept of "thing in itself," and the duality between the Idea and nature, by treating the phenomenal world as a process of becoming, which contains and realizes the essence of the Absolute Idea. In some sense, the Idea exists a priori as it is with Kant's concept. In a more comprehensive manner, which takes process and totality into account, the relationship of the Idea and the thing-in-itself is internal and dialectical. As will be discussed in the next chapter, Hegel says the dialectical process "forms a circle." Here, then, Hegel attempts to solve the classic problem of chicken-and-egg, reflected in the debate between idealism and materialism as the question of which comes first between matter and thought. But this is not all. Hegel establishes an internal relation, in both epistemological and ontological terms, between the thing-for-itself and the thing-in-itself, a relation that requires each term to be conceived and to exist *in* the other. It is in the light of the internal and circular dialectic that Hegel's Absolute Idea must be conceived as the ultimate thing-for-itself, penetrating and residing within the thing-in-itself in a historical process. In this manner, Hegel attempts to solve the duality, or the Kantian irresolvable antinomy, between thought and matter. Instead of a duality, he proposes a subjective totality.

Very briefly stated, for Hegel, "the absolute Idea alone is *being,* imperishable *life, self-knowing truth,* and is *all truth.*" It encompasses both

"Nature and spirit," which are "in general different modes of presenting" the "existence" of the Absolute Idea, and "art and religion," which are "its different modes of apprehending itself and giving itself an adequate existence." Hence, the Absolute Idea "embraces those shapes of real and ideal finitude as well as of infinitude . . . " The "business of philosophy is to cognise [the Absolute Idea] in these manifold manifestations of itself."[19]

Thus, the Absolute Idea is the "living substance"[20] of the phenomenal world. In this manner, Hegel perceives the dialectical process as the active self-realization and negation of the Idea *within* this world, a process in which the Idea comes to constitute itself as the *essence* of the latter. Phenomena, thus, contain an inner significance as essence, a degree of actuality as rationality, which is knowable to the extent that the Idea partakes in phenomena, as the latter's essence, and reveals itself to human consciousness. History is a process in which this realization and revelation occur ontologically and epistemologically at higher and fuller levels (more "concrete" levels). The main task of philosophy is to comprehend this process. It follows from this consideration that the substance is also the subject of both the historical process and the philosophical comprehension.

In brief, Hegel's philosophy seeks to comprehend not only the substance as the essence but also the subject of the phenomenal world and its historical development. As he puts it, "In my view—a view which the developed exposition of the system itself can alone justify—everything depends on grasping and expressing the ultimate truth not as Substance but as Subject as well."[21] As it turns out, the Idea is both the substance and the subject: substance as subject, constituting itself as the essence of the phenomenal world, uniting the thing-in-itself with the thing-for-itself in a historical process and thus becoming absolute.

Consistent with the three propositions discussed earlier is Hegel's axiom that Idea (or God) is the infinite substance and infinite power ("being for itself"), and since the infinite cannot be determined, it must be the determining force of world history. Therefore, the "Idea is the True, the Eternal, simply the Power . . . (I)t reveals itself in the world, and that nothing else is revealed in the world but that Idea itself, its glory and majesty . . . "[22] Thus, history proceeds as a "gradual process" in which the Idea is realized through a dialectical thought process that constantly negates one consciousness for another, and in turn forms the external world after its own image. As Hegel explains,

> World history . . . presents the development of consciousness, the development of Spirit's [mind's] consciousness of its freedom, and the actualization that is produced by that consciousness. This development entails a gradual

> process, a series of further determinations of freedom that arise from the concept of world history. The logical nature, and moreover the dialectical nature of the concept in general is that it is self-determining: it posits determinations in itself, then negates them, and thereby gains in this negation (*Aufheben*) an affirmative, richer, and more concrete determination.[23]

Hegel thus offers an idealist philosophy of history. This includes an ideational subject of history, as well as a teleological history whose unfolding is predetermined by the essence of the Idea as the substance. This essence of the substance is identified with "freedom," which is a form of self-determination, based on rationality. In his words, "The *final goal of the world* . . . is Spirit's consciousness of its freedom, and hence also the actualization of that very freedom."[24] Since the Spirit is the mind, the goal of this world is to become conscious of the Absolute Idea.[25] This thought also signals Hegel's teleological view of history in which the "final goal of the world" is the realization of the Idea and its freedom. This thought is supplemented by the claim that there is always a world history, since all history is a combined history in pursuit of the development of the Idea.

From the discussion thus far, it is clear that there is no process, and therefore no history and dialectics, without a subject. To say the same thing differently, the subject in question has active, dialectical, and historical nature. This means that it is always engaged in a process of becoming not merely something else, an other, but also becoming more of itself in a process in which its potentiality is actualized more concretely. The difference between Marx and Hegel in this regard is most fundamentally in the nature of the dialectical-historical subject. Before this claim can be established sufficiently, it is necessary to provide a general, albeit brief, account of how Marx differentiates his dialectic from that of Hegel.

2.4 Marx's Criticism of Hegel's Dialectic and Historical Subject

Insofar as the dialectic is concerned, there is no doubt that Marx owes Hegel a great deal. In a letter to his close friend Ludwig Kugelmann, Marx says Eugen Duhring misrepresents his dialectic method employed in *Capital*: "He knows full well that my method of exposition is *not* Hegelian, since I am a materialist, and Hegel an idealist." This point about his difference with Hegel is universally acknowledged. What is not so universally acknowledged is the fact that Marx developed his concepts in *Capital* dialectically. Also revealing is that Marx thinks "Hegel's dialectic is the basic form of all dialectic . . . " This means that Marx generally accepts

Hegel's dialectic method or, as Althusser puts it, owes Hegel in this regard. But in clarifying his difference with Hegel, setting his materialism apart from the latter's idealism, Marx suggests that the dialectic method has to be "stripped of its mystical form, and it is precisely this that differentiates *my* method."[26] Thus, understanding Marx's materialism, or how he flips Hegel back on his feet, requires deciphering why *he thinks* Hegel's idealism is mystical.

In similar terms as stated in the letter to Kugelmann, Marx elsewhere explains the basis of Hegel's mysticism as follows:

> My dialectic method is not only different from the Hegelian, but is its direct opposite. To Hegel, the life process of the human brain, i.e., the process of thinking, which, under the name of "the Idea," he even transforms into an independent subject, is the demiurgos of the real world, and the real world is only the external, phenomenal form of "the Idea." With me, on the contrary, the ideal is nothing else than the material world reflected by the human mind, and translated into forms of thought.[27]

The mysticism of Hegel's idealism derives from his treatment of the subject as an "independent . . . demiurgos of the real world," whose essence is merely "thinking" (consciousness). Marx, thus, opposes the Hegelian characterization of the historical subject as both an independent and a non-objective being.

The last sentence of Marx's passage just quoted may be thought to reject the notion of human subject. This assumption is tantamount to the notion that the subject cannot be anything other than mere consciousness. Marx here only opposes the treatment of "the Idea," that is, the thought process, as an independent subject of history, or, which is the same thing, the reduction of the subject to consciousness. Marx's materialism, in contrast, states, "the ideal is nothing else than the material world reflected by the human mind." Indeed, the point being made here assumes a notion of human subject, since the ideal is generated *by* the human mind.

As Marx explains in a different but relevant context, within the process of world creation, or what he elsewhere calls "life process," "producers . . . transform themselves in that they evolve new qualities from within themselves, develop through production new powers and new ideas, new modes of intercourse, new needs, and new speech."[28] But "At the end of every labour-process, we get a result that already existed in the imagination of the labourer at its commencement. He not only effects a change of form in the material on which he works, but he also realizes a purpose of his own that gives the law to his *modus operandi.*"[29]

Thus, consciousness for Marx is both the result and the presupposition of constantly revolving processes animated by objective activity.[30] Consciousness is both determining and determined. More accurately, it exists as a simultaneous dialectical moment of human praxis.

Occasional statements in Hegel's writings assign a crucial role for human activity: "For actuality, there must be a *second* element added—and that is activity or actualization. The principle of this is the will, i.e., human activity in general. Only through this activity is the concept realized, actualized—for these aims and principles are not immediately valid in and of themselves."[31]

This statement is crucial to the interpretation of both Marx and Hegel. Simply put, no actuality and actualization, and therefore no dialectical process, can exist without human activity. Nevertheless, even here, Hegel assigns human activity a secondary role, for it is the "concept" that is prioritized.[32] But, very importantly, Hegel offers a crucial dialectical lesson that Marx follows: "activity or actualization" is a necessary logical first premise of the dialectical process, and it must be carried out by a subject.

An important problem, according to Marx, is that Hegel's philosophy makes the *subject* of the process constantly revolve within itself because Hegel says the dialectic of consciousness is "self-determining: it posits determinations in itself, then negates them . . . " (Chapter 1). Consequently, the subject (Idea) remains "pure," that is, object-less, since the realization of the Absolute Idea requires merely the logical abolition of the objective-empirical world within the consciousness. Following Feuerbach, Marx claims: "A non-objective being is a non-being."[33] The only being that can be for itself are humans, precisely because they are at once an active subject-object. Because of the objective nature of the human subject, a true dialectical self-realization occurs in and through nature or the process does not merely revolve within itself as the self-transcendence of consciousness.

This difference in the nature of the subject of history relates to another difference between Hegel and Marx. Hegel presupposes an *absolute* being as the subject of history. Marx does not. It is a matter of curiosity that Hegel's absolute being needs to realize itself. This implies that God/Idea is needy and thus not self-sufficient. A self-sufficient, absolute being by definition does not need to actualize itself. Thus, no action is needed on its part to achieve consequences that enhance self-sufficiency. It is for this reason, for instance, that Aristotle took away all "action" and "production" from self-sufficient gods, and reduced them to a "contemplative" life. The "circumstances of action . . . (are) trivial and unworthy of gods."[34]

Feuerbach recognizes this dilemma in Hegel's philosophy. According to Feuerbach, a being that is limitless, timeless, and needless is a nonbeing,

or is "superfluous" and "has no need for existence."[35] Marx, too, adopts this ontological position by focusing on a conception of human nature that is in part explained through the inherent neediness of human beings ("man is a suffering being") and the activity of self-realization to overcome their inherent insufficiency. History, from one general vantage point Marx provides, is precisely this process of humankind's need satisfaction and self-realization; it is a constant attempt at self-sufficiency of an insufficient being through objective activity (labor). This only means that there is history and historical existence because humans, by their nature, have needs, which they can satisfy only by transforming their conditions of existence and also themselves in the process, as discussed in Chapter 1.

In a nutshell, Marx replaces Hegel's Absolute non-objective subject with a non-absolute objective being as the subject of history. This also requires replacing the purely subjective activity with the objective activity of the historical subject.

2.5 HUMAN ACTIVITY AND HISTORICAL MATERIALISM

Like much else in Marx's thought, his theory of historical materialism has also received its share of distortions. In an influential work, Karl R. Popper, for instance, identifies the *historical* part of historical materialism with "historicism as *economism.*"[36] Historicism itself is a theory of "prophecy" that rests upon the "evolutionary method."[37] As Popper describes, Marx's historicism is

> based upon the scientific method of analysing cause and effect, and upon scientific prediction. And since he assumed prediction in the field of society to be the same as historical prophecy, scientific socialism was to be based upon the study of historical causes and historical effects, and finally upon the prophecy of its own advent.

All in all, because Marx presumably assumes complete predetermination in history, he falls under the illusion that the future can be predicted in precise, "scientific" terms. This implies, according to Popper, nothing other than "rigid determinism." [38] Since history unfolds as a consequence of economic development and interaction, Marx's historicism should be called "economic historicism." Thus, "*economism*" of Marx, according to Popper, is a theory of historicism based upon rigid economic determinism. This economic determinism presumably also captures the basis of Marx's materialism, that is, the *materialism* of historical materialism.[39]

Popper's interpretation, thus, amounts to the accusation that Marx subscribed to a positivist-teleological view of history, based on rigid

economic determinism. The last section of this chapter will discuss teleological misinterpretation of Marx. For now, three things must be stated clearly: First, Popper's entire book is a pile of misinterpretations peppered with occasional compliments to Marx. Such compliments intend to add an aura of objectivity to his falsifications. Second, because of the association of historical materialism with economic historicism—and Popper is hardly alone in popularizing this view—many Marxists ended up dismissing the claim that Marx was a historical materialist. After all, they claim Marx did not even use this expression to capture his philosophy of history. This claim is true in an unimportant sense, that is, in the same way that Marx did not often use the expression "the dictatorship of the proletariat," or even "capitalism."[40] In my view, "historical materialism" is a useful expression, regardless of the distortions it has acquired in the hands of Marx's supporters and enemies alike.

This leads to the third point, which is defended here. Marx and Engels explicitly refer to their view as the "materialist conception of history."[41] While this conception is often called "historical materialism," the more important issue to consider is how one should more accurately understand Marx's materialism, historical and dialectical. The most basic thesis defended here is that humanism is the basis of Marx's materialism, of his materialist conception of history.[42]

Indeed, materialism and humanism amounted to the same thing until Marx's time.

In *The Holy Family,* Marx and Engels provide a brief synopsis of materialism that came before them:

> There is no need for any great penetration to see from the teaching of materialism on the original goodness and equal intellectual endowment of men, the omnipotence of experience, habit and education, and the influence of environment on man, the great significance of industry, the justification of enjoyment, etc., how necessarily materialism is connected with communism and socialism. If man draws all his knowledge, sensation, etc., from the world of the senses and the experience gained in it, then what has to be done is to arrange the empirical world in such a way that man experiences and becomes accustomed to what is truly human in it and that he becomes aware of himself as man. If correctly understood interest is the principle of all morality, man's private interest must be made to coincide with the interest of humanity. If man is unfree in the materialistic sense, i.e., is free not through the negative power to avoid this or that, but through the positive power to assert his true individuality, crime must not be punished in the individual, but the anti-social sources of crime must be destroyed, and each man must be given social scope for the vital manifestation of his being. If man is shaped by environment, his environment must be made

> human. If man is social by nature, he will develop his true nature only in society, and the power of his nature must be measured not by the power of the separate individual but by the power of society. These and similar propositions are to be found almost literally even in the oldest French materialists . . .
>
> *Fourier* proceeds directly from the teaching of the French materialists. The *Babouvists* were crude, uncivilised materialists, but developed communism, too, derives *directly* from *French materialism* . . . The more scientific French Communists, *Dézamy, Gay* and others, developed the teaching of *materialism* as the teaching of *real humanism* and the *logical* basis of *communism.*[43]

In the principles of this trend of communistic materialism are found the origins of Marx's own materialism.[44] Marx's vision of communism owes significantly to this tradition, even if he considered certain aspects of it utopian. Humanism is the secret of all communistic materialism, as it is revealed in this passage. Developed materialism is "humanism." Marx's materialism is developed humanism understood in a historical context dialectically. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Marx calls his own outlook "naturalism or humanism," which is "distinct from both idealism and materialism, and constitutes at the same time the unifying truth of both."[45]

Humanism, of course, as Schaff explains, involves two interrelated aspects. It has a moral vision, based on humanizing the life conditions, and an explanatory premise, based on explaining society and history through human activity.[46] These are precisely the two standpoints the concept of human nature helps formulate. As also discussed in Chapter 1, Marx criticizes the materialists before him for ignoring history and the role human activity plays in the making of history. The sort of humanism Marx proposes is thus grounded in the concept of human activity, which sets history in motion.

But why is his humanism also called "materialism"? The reasons for this, which have much to do with the concept of human nature, were explained in Chapter 1 and also earlier in this chapter. They can be briefly restated as follows: "An objective being acts objectively, and he would not act objectively if the objective did not reside in the very nature of his being. He only creates or posits objects, because he is posited by objects—because at bottom he is *nature.*"[47] Acting objectively stems from the objective human needs; the material objects are human need, which can be satisfied only through human interaction with the material world and with other humans. Need satisfaction, broadly conceived, through objective activity is the general aim of human beings in history, which is

not, by the way, the same as history having its own teleological aim apart from humans. Thus, human activity is always material activity, not only because the subject is essentially, at the bottom, material (objective), but also because the object of activity is material, even when this activity is purely theoretical. In short, Marx's materialism and humanism are of one piece.

If so, historical materialism must be conceived as historical humanism. It is in the spirit of this thought that, in opposition to the idealist teleological view of history, *The Holy Family* states: "*History* does *nothing,* it 'possesses no immense wealth', . . . 'history' is not a person apart, using man as a means for *its own* particular ends; history is *nothing but* the activity of man pursuing his aims."[48] (Note that "nothing but" is a way of countering alternative views by emphasizing an essential factor ignored by others. This should be kept in mind for similar Marxian expressions.) As Engels explains in the "Foreword" to *The Holy Family,* materialism as "real humanism" sets history back on its feet by restoring "the real individual man" as history's first premise.[49]

In *The German Ideology,* the idealist version of history is again criticized on the same materialist/humanist grounds for not seeing humans and their essential activity ("production of life" as "the relation of man to nature" in the following passage) as the real and primary basis of history.

> In the whole conception of history up to the present this real basis of history has either been totally neglected or else considered as a minor matter quite irrelevant to the course of history. History must, therefore, always be written according to an extraneous standard; the real production of life seems to be primeval history, while the truly historical appears to be separated from ordinary life, something extra-superterrestrial. With this the relation of man to nature is excluded from history and hence the antithesis of nature and history is created.[50]

According to Marx, there is no "antithesis in nature and in history," because a human being always has "before him an historical nature and a natural history."[51] Humans have historical nature because they assert their powers to modify nature and themselves. They have natural history because history is a result of their actions, and the results of their actions constitute their nature as their existence. They have a historical nature and natural history because they have needs or are compelled by necessity. Thus, Marx makes humans as subject the internal first premise, as opposed to "extraneous standard" employed before him.

For instance, Marx and Engels openly declare: "The premises we begin with are . . . the real individuals, their activity and the material conditions

of their life, both those they find already existing and those produced by their activity . . . " In other words,

> the first premise of all human history is . . . the existence of living human individuals. Thus, the first act to be established is the physical organization of these individuals and their consequent relation to the rest of nature . . . All historical writing must set out from these natural bases and their modification in the course of history through the action of men.[52]

Again, they comment: "Since we are dealing with the Germans, who are devoid of premises, we must begin by stating the first premise of all human existence and, therefore, of all history, the premise, namely, that men must be in a position to live in order to be able to 'make history.' "[53] This comment is highly significant, as it opposes the Germans, who are "devoid of premises." Marx's thought, thus, cannot be understood without acknowledging the presence of a first premise in his thought. This point contradicts Althusser's notion that all origin is suppressed in the Marxian dialectic. It also contradicts thing/matter-determinism's primacy thesis by prioritizing humans and their activities as the first premise of all history.

In our effort to highlight the "first premise" of Marx's theory of history, we must not lose sight of another dialectical dimension of Marx's materialism, expressed in *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte,* "Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past."[54] When we investigate the origin of the "circumstances . . . transmitted from the past," we find in Marx the explanation that these circumstances are themselves created by human beings. This historical process in which the subject is also determined is an essential aspect of Marx's dialectic, which assumes a circular-transformative movement in which humans are the ultimate subject and object of the historical process.

This thought is most clearly stated in *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy,* quoted partially in the previous chapter. In this work, Marx offers an explanation of the rise and development of capital and humanity, that is, their general history. Of the latter, he notes, "Man comes into existence only when a certain point [in the development of organic life] is reached. But once man has emerged, he becomes the permanent presupposition of human history, likewise its permanent product and result, and he is *presupposition* only as his own product and result."[55] In short, the "action of men," or history making, involves, as *The German Ideology* repeats, "*reshaping of nature* by man" and "the *reshaping of men by men.*"[56]

The first premise of historical materialism, the activity of production, will be further highlighted and explained in the next two chapters. However, Marx's theory of history raises further questions that cannot be readily accommodated by the explanation provided here. These questions, in one way or another, pertain to the issue of teleology, or Marx's presumed teleological theory of history.

2.6 What Historical Materialism Is Not: Teleological View of History

As already noted earlier in this chapter, Hegel has a teleological philosophy of history. According to a popular view, Marx follows the Hegelian teleological view, though from a materialist point of view. Jon Elster, like Popper, argues: "Marx was guided by a teleological view of history."[57] Long before Elster and Popper came to the scene, Marx was accused of subscribing to a teleological view of history in his own lifetime. He did not take this accusation lightly.

The most unambiguous statement of Marx's rejection of the teleological theory of history is made in his "Letter to Otechestvenniye Zapiski." This letter, which Elster is familiar with, covers several important aspects of the teleological view. For this reason, it constitutes the most complete and explicit response by Marx on this subject. It responds to an accusation leveled against Marx by one N. K. Mikhailovsky. What is interesting about Mikhailovsky's criticism is that it closely parallels Elster's criticism. It also relates to the speculation of teleological determinism in *Capital,* proposed by many of his interpreters.

The accusation is simply that Marx's teleological view of history assumes that all societies would undergo the same transition toward the same predetermined goal and that all the horrors of capitalist development are justified—because the historical end justifies the means.[58] Marx flatly rejects attributing to him all of these related views.

On the latter issue of justifying all that happens in history, Marx's letter says the following:

> In the Afterword to the second German edition of *Capital*—which the author [Mikhailovsky] of the article about Mr. Zhukovsky knows, because he quotes it—I speak of "a great Russian scholar and critic" [N.G. Chernyshevsky] with the high esteem which he deserves. In his noteworthy articles the latter dealt with the question whether Russia should start, as its liberal economists wish, by destroying the rural community in order to pass to a capitalist system or whether, on the contrary, it can acquire all the fruits of this system without suffering its torments, by

> developing its own historical conditions. He comes out in favour of the second solution. And my honourable critic [Mikhailovsky] would have been at least as justified in inferring from my esteem for this "great Russian scholar and critic" that I shared his views on this question as he is in concluding from my polemic against the "belletrist" and Pan-Slavist that I rejected them.

In order that his critics do not second-guess the meaning of his comment, Marx concludes, based on many years of studying, "I have arrived at this result: if Russia continues along the path it has followed since 1861, it will miss the finest chance that history has ever offered to a nation, only to undergo all the fatal vicissitudes of the capitalist system."[59] Marx's agreement with Chernyshevsky that Russia should develop in its unique ways without suffering the "torments" and "fatal vicissitudes of the capitalist system" contradicts Elster's groundless assertion that Marx's philosophy of history, like Hegel's, regards "pre-capitalist man as so many sheep for the slaughter."[60] This issue will be discussed later in this chapter and also repeatedly in the ensuing chapters.

As for the combined ("integral") development, Marx continues, "my critic" finds it necessary to,

> metamorphose my historical sketch of the genesis of capitalism in Western Europe into a historico-philosophic theory of general development, imposed by fate on all peoples, whatever the historic circumstances in which they are placed, in order to eventually attain this economic formation which, with a tremendous leap of productive forces of social labour, assures the most integral development of every individual development.

Marx, then, proceeds to furnish some evidence that *Capital* offers a nonteleological view of history with some examples:

> In various places in *Capital* I allude to the destiny of the plebeians of Ancient Rome. They were originally free peasants cultivating their own plots of land on their own account. In the course of Roman history they were expropriated. The same movement which cut them off from their means of production and subsistence involved not only the formation of large landed property but also the formation of large money capital. Thus, one fine morning, there were on the one hand free men stripped of everything except their labour power, and on the other, in order to exploit this labour, the owner of all the acquired wealth. What happened?

Given the presumed integral development view of history, one should expect Marx to say this dispossession is a necessary step toward the development of capitalism, since this is exactly what happened in the

Western countries, according to Marx's view. But that is not what happened:

> The Roman proletarians became not wage labourers but an idle "*MOB,*" more abject than the former "*POOR WHITES*" of the southern states of America; and alongside them there developed a mode of production which was not capitalist but based on slavery. Thus events strikingly analogous, but occurring in different historical milieux, led to quite disparate results.

According to Marx, through the comparative method, or "By studying each of these evolutions on its own, and then by comparing them, one will easily discover the key to the phenomenon, but it will never be arrived at by employing the all-purpose formula of a general historico-philosophical theory, whose supreme virtue of which consists in being supra-historical."[61] The point is that such a theory of history cannot adequately explain the historical specificity of different societies and their development, even if all societies are based on the activity of production, and its corresponding social relations.

Why, then, Mikhailovsky and others see in *Capital* a teleological view of history, especially in the theory of primitive accumulation of capital? The reason is acknowledged and explained by Marx in his response letter. The "chapter on primitive accumulation," says Marx,

> does not pretend to do more than trace the road by which in Western Europe the capitalist economic order emerged from the entrails of the feudal economic order. It thus describes the historical movement which by divorcing the producers from their means of production transforms them to wage-workers (proletarians in the modern sense of the word) and the owners of the means of production into capitalists.

Marx explains by quoting *Capital,* "In this history," that is, the history of Western Europe—England in particular,

> every revolution which acts as a lever for advancement of the capitalist class in its process of formation marks an epoch; above all that which, by stripping great masses of men of their traditional means of production and means of subsistence hurls them on the labour market. But the basis of this whole development is the expropriation of the agricultural producer. To date, this has not been accomplished in a radical fashion anywhere except in England . . . but all the other countries of Western Europe are undergoing the same process etc.

At the end of this chapter from *Capital,* the historical tendency of capitalist production is summed up as follows:

> that it "itself begets its own negation with the inexorability which governs the metamorphoses of nature;" that it has itself created the elements of a new economic order, by giving the greatest impulse at once to the productive forces of social labour and to the integral development of every individual producer; that capitalist property, which actually rests already on a collective mode of production, can only be transformed into social property.[62]

The relevant conclusions for our purposes are the following. The general theory of history as such was not Marx's primary concern in *Capital.* As far as history comes to bear on his explanations, he focuses on "this history," the history of the origins of capitalism in the geographical area where it first emerged: Western Europe in general and England in particular. He repeats the same argument in "Preface to the First German Edition," of *Capital,* stating explicitly that he is observing, like a "physicist," "physical phenomena where they occur in their most typical form and most free from disturbing influence," under conditions of "normality." The place where he finds the most suitable ground is "England."[63]

Marx's findings about the "tendency" of capitalism that he refers to in his response letter, or capitalism's "general laws of motion" mentioned in the "Preface," is thus based on what the development of capitalism generates as a tendency. On the basis of his observations of capitalism under its "normal" conditions of development, he concludes that (a) "capitalist economic order emerged from the entrails of the feudal economic order" and (b) this economic order is generating the tendency to spread throughout the globe (see later in the chapter) and the tendency of its own negation. In other words, Marx predicts communism on the basis of the likely destiny of capitalist development made possible by its own laws of motion. Neither capitalism nor communism is explained as the telos of all history up to this time, following an integral development. What explains the rise of capitalism is ultimately the "expropriation of the agricultural producer," or, more generally, the rise of wage-labor. This explanation will become crucial to our understanding of Marx's theory of capitalism in the next chapter.

However, one might assume that Marx's occasional periodization of human history into distinctive forms suggests otherwise. In *Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy,* for instance, he presents three "great forms" in human history:

> Relations of personal dependence (which originally arise quite spontaneously) are the first forms of society, in which human productivity

> develops only to a limited extent and at isolated points. Personal independence based upon dependence *mediated by things* is the second great form, and only in it is a system of general social exchange of matter, a system of universal relations, universal requirements and universal capacities, formed. Free individuality, based on the universal development of individuals and the subordination of their communal, social productivity, which is their social possession, is the third stage. The second stage creates the conditions for the third.[64]

In Elster's estimation, this is a "negation of the negation" argument with teleological history overtones.[65] However, this passage lacks all the important presuppositions of a teleological view of history with Hegelian proportions. No direct connection between the first and the third form is established by Marx here, or elsewhere. There is nothing inherent in the first form that anticipates the third. The only direct relation being made here is that the "second stage creates the conditions for the third." What Marx offers in terms of the development of history, then, is a stage theory of history, whereby each subsequent mode of production develops out of the one preceding it. Even then, the "vindication of chance," or the role chance also plays in history, must also be acknowledged.[66]

Another general tendency of capitalism not sufficiently discussed yet, which may also be mistaken for the all-encompassing teleological view of history, is the *tendency of expansion.* Capitalism, and among all the modes of production it stands alone in this regard, has an inherent tendency to expand and generate a combined world history. To some extent, a passage from "Introduction" to *Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy,* describes this tendency's result as a "system of general social exchange of matter, a system of universal relations, universal requirements and universal capacities." In other words, capitalism creates the conditions of universality and anticipates a world history. *The German Ideology* explains that "only with (the) universal development of productive forces is a *universal* intercourse between men established." Without this, "the *forces* of intercourse could not have developed as *universal,* hence unendurable powers."[67] This work tells us again that what people thought was the "dirty trick" of the "spirit" (Hegel) causing the world history is actually the "world market."[68]

In brief, in Hegel's teleological philosophy of history, all history up to the present time is world history; all that has happened ultimately contributes to one predetermined end. Nothing substantially new emerges in the process, except the fuller, more concrete actualization of the Idea. According to Marx, there never was a combined world history before the advent of capitalism. Marx's visualization of a globalizing tendency of capitalism to create a world after its own image, to bring forth a world history,

is explained by the inner workings of capitalism, by its inexorable tendency to expand. In "Introduction" to *Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy,* with Hegel in his mind, Marx states, "world history did not exist always; history as world history is a result."[69]

Elster acknowledges that the teleological view of history is explicitly rejected by Marx in *The German Ideology,* but not generally.[70] The passage Elster has in mind says that "later history" is not "the goal of earlier history." The general context of this passage brings us to another related theory inherent in many teleological views: the inevitability theory, which Elster does not consider in this highly relevant context. Even though *The Communist Manifesto* says that the communistic revolution is "inevitable," Marx does not have a view of history based on the inevitability of a pre-given, eternal teleological design. Indeed, Marx argues, all along, against such a teleological view, by suggesting that force is always a part of establishing a new mode of production. For instance, the passage from *The German Ideology* quoted earlier in text, which says that "later history" is *not* "the goal of earlier history," culminates into the conclusion that communism is to be established with a revolutionary "alteration" because the "ruling class cannot be overthrown in any other way."[71] *The Communist Manifesto* clearly displays the same revolutionary spirit.

As for the establishment of capitalism, Marx repeatedly argues in *Capital* and elsewhere that force played and continues to play a significant part in the development of capitalism (see Chapter 6). As Marx argues in *The Communist Manifesto,* the inherent capitalist need to expand "chases the bourgeoisie over the whole surface of the globe" and gives "a cosmopolitan character to production and consumption in every country." Thus, "In place of the old local and national seclusion and self-sufficiency, we have intercourse in every direction, universal inter-dependence of nations." But even this tendency that appeared only with the development of capitalism is not sufficient. The "bourgeoisie . . . compels all nations, on pain of extinction, to adopt the bourgeois mode of production; it compels them to introduce what it calls civilisation into their midst, i.e., to become bourgeois themselves. In one word, it creates a world after its own image."[72]

As it is the case with *The Manifesto,* Marx's comments on colonization often highlight the forceful creation of a capitalist world order. The forceful conversion of India by Britain, for instance, is clearly highlighted in Marx's article "The British Rule in India."[73] In other words, the development of capitalism does not occur organically as a response to some inherent, teleological urge. In fact, Marx had a plan to explain in *Capital* the "*derived* and *transmitted,* non-original, relations of production," as a

result of the "influence of international relations."[74] Alas, he was unable to finish *Capital.*

Yet another concept makes Marx's view a suspect for teleology: the close association between Marx's approach to human nature, history, and communism has led some to assume that his theory of history is teleological. Once again, we find Elster behind this view. According to Elster, "*Humanity* was for Marx what Spirit or Reason was for Hegel." This statement has much truth in it insofar as we do not explain it, as Elster does, as "the supra-individual entity whose full development is the goal of history . . ."[75] Elster does not offer any solid evidence to support this claim.[76]

Elster's haphazard comment assumes that according to Marx, humanity, because of its nature (essence), is predestined to live in the future communist society. In *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844,* Marx repeatedly links human nature to history, although some passages are vague enough to be pushed in the direction of the teleological view of history. This is because Marx explains history as the act of humanity and human essence as something imbued with a telos (in the Aristotelian sense) of self-realization, development, and living in a community. Thus, for Marx, human nature explains why there is history, production, and the need for community. But, in these manuscripts too, Marx explicitly states,

> Communism is the position as the negation of the negation, and is hence the *actual* phase necessary for the next stage of historical development in the process of human emancipation and rehabilitation. *Communism* is the necessary form and the dynamic principle of the immediate future, but communism as such is not the goal of human development—the form of human society.[77]

Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy repeats this nonteleological reading of history based on human nature: "Universally developed individuals, whose social relationships are their own communal relationships and therefore subjected to their own communal control, are not products of nature but of history."[78] However, elsewhere Marx states, "History itself is a *real* part of *natural* history—of nature developing into man."[79]

History in general, then, is the ongoing integration of nature and humans, which must be perceived as a process of their mutual internalization. This historical humanist materialist view is a teleological view only to the extent that this integration is a natural human inclination (a human telos in this sense only) that occurs throughout history in different, particular forms. This notion of the human telos precludes any predestined societal blueprint that all historical action works to achieve

unconsciously. It precludes, in other words, a teleological view of history. It includes the notion, in Marx's thought, that some social arrangements are better for human beings than the others, such as communism. But, as just discussed, the possibility of *developed,* full-scale, worldwide communism is a historical phenomenon, made possible and necessary only with the development of capitalism.

2.7 HEGEL'S MORAL POSITIVISM AND THE END OF HISTORY

Several additional differences between Marx and Hegel must be understood in order to develop a more nuanced analysis of Marx's philosophy of history. First, Hegel's teleological view fails to leap forward and theorize the future history as a likely development embedded in the present. Marx, as already discussed earlier in this chapter, finds in the current system the seeds of the future, communistic society as a necessary possibility. Second, Hegel's philosophy disallows any criticism of the existing state of affairs, whereas Marx uses the dialectic method to point out that the present stage is contradictory, and hence transitory. The third and related distinction is that Hegel justifies the existing historical stage as one in which the subjective and objective worlds have been reconciled. In sharp contrast, Marx puts the current stage under critical scrutiny as a stage of immense dehumanization. In what follows, I will attempt to bring these contrasts out of their writings.

Although Hegel describes "the phenomenal world" as being part "negative, part positive,"[80] he argues that the world is ultimately as it ought to be. As he suggests, "Who is not smart enough to be able to see around him quite a lot that is not, in fact, how it ought to be?" But, Hegel continues, "this smartness is wrong when it has the illusion that, in its dealings with objects of this kind and their 'ought', it is operating within the [true] concerns of philosophical science." Thus, philosophical science should not be concerned with the question of ought, or should be concerned only with the comprehension of the Idea as it *is* in actuality. [81]

This Hegelian lack of interest in ought is partly linked to the inability of the mind to comprehend the "ideal" before the real reaches its full historical development. As Hegel famously states,

> This lesson of the concept is necessarily also apparent from history, namely that it is only when the actuality has reached maturity that the ideal appear opposite the real and reconstructs this real world, which it has grasped in its substance, in the shape of an intellectual realm. When philosophy paints its grey in grey, a shape of life has grown old, and it cannot be rejuvenated,

> but only recognized, by the grey in grey of philosophy; the owl of Minerva begins its flight only with the onset of dusk.[82]

Therefore, a new life cannot be rejuvenated by the mind through criticism, unless the old life reaches its maturity. Thus, one cannot leap forward: "*Hic* Rhodus, *hic* saltus."[83] With this move, Hegel makes the Idea a product of the phenomenal world in spite of himself.

This Hegelian view is somewhat attributable to Marx. Marx's criticism of utopianism resonates well with it, though there is also a significant difference. Marx, through his critical dialectic, arrives at the formulation of the mature capitalism and even communism on the basis of the laws and tendencies of its own development, without having to await the completion of this development. Each mode of production illustrates not only what preceded it,[84] but also what it potentially holds in store for the future.[85] In this sense, Marx leaps forward by envisioning a communistic society.[86] His theory of history extends into the future, though not in terms of a precise blueprint.

Apart from the question of the ability to raise consciousness beyond the present, Hegel actually justifies human suffering. As it turns out, the irrational, the negative, is a part of, subsumed in, the grand plan of the Idea in its historical movement of self-actualization toward its goal (telos). Human sacrifices, the negative, are made in order to attain this goal:

> What was the ultimate goal for which . . . monstrous sacrifices were made? . . . (I)n this perspective, the events that present such a grim for our troubled feeling and thoughtful reflection have to be seen as the *means* for what we claim is the substantial definition, the absolute end-goal or, equally, the *true* result of history.[87]

Hegel calls this "*Cunning of Reason,*" which "allows the passions to work for it, while what it brings into existence suffers loss and injury . . . " This is justified because "Compared to the universal, the particular is for the most part too slight in importance; individuals are surrendered and sacrificed. The Idea pays the ransom of the existence and transience—not out of its own pocket, but with the passions of individuals."[88]

Accordingly, Hegel concludes, "The insight to which philosophy ought to lead . . . is that the real world is as it ought to be . . ."[89] even if it is built at the expense of the individuals. Reason, thus, trumps passions and accepts the given circumstances as they are, as necessary steps that serve the purposes of the Idea's teleological-historical development in its transient existence. This view is supplemented by the famous Hegelian dictum: "What is rational is actual, and what is actual is rational."[90]

For Hegel, the actual is the rational insofar as the reality corresponds to the revelation of the Idea. In this sense of the actual, "nothing else is revealed in the world but that Idea itself, its glory and majesty . . . "[91] This is also related to Hegel's well-known position, despite some of his comments to the contrary, that the end of history, and hence the actualization of the Idea, have been attained in the form of constitutional monarchy in Germany. If so, the glory of the Idea has been actualized, and that what has been actualized must be glorified. It is through the consciousness of this reconciliation that alienation of thought would be overcome.

According to Marx, Hegel "sees only the positive, and not the negative side . . . "[92] This allows Hegel to create a harmony between essence and existence, thus declaring the phenomenal world as it ought to be and refusing to criticize the existing state of affairs.[93] Chapter 4 will discuss how this is also related to the fact that Hegel ultimately reduces alienation to a mental process of externalization, without giving due attention to objective alienation as dehumanization in the current stage of history.

Marx, then, criticizes Hegel for his idealism and passive, even affirmative, attitude. In fact, he thinks the two aspects of Hegel's thought are related and should be explained through his idealist dialectic. To reiterate, Marx considers his own dialectic method to be, in some sense, the "direct opposite" of Hegel's dialectic method, which assumes a "mystified form." He goes on to add, in this form, "dialectic became the fashion in Germany, because it seemed to transfigure and to glorify the existing state of things."[94] This glorification neatly follows from the justification of all that exists by Hegel within the framework of the end-of-history thesis, since the constitutional monarchy in Germany is taken to represent the final stage of development the Idea would historically muster.

However, in "its rational form," dialectic "is a scandal and abomination to bourgeoisdom and its doctrinaire professors," to those who "glorify" the existing state of affairs and take them to be the final stage of historical development. Perceived correctly, dialectic

> includes in its comprehension and affirmative recognition of the existing state of things, at the same time also, the recognition of the negation of that state, of its inevitable breaking up; because it regards every historically developed social form as in fluid movement, and therefore takes into account its transient nature not less than its momentary existence; because it lets nothing impose upon it, and is in its essence critical and revolutionary.[95]

Marx's dialectic, in short, instead of being passive and merely affirmative, is "in its essence critical and revolutionary." This means nothing other than the rejection of Hegelian moral positivism, which refuses to

criticize and at times even glorifies the existing state of affairs. Marx's criticism of the existing state of affairs will be discussed further in chapters 4 and 5. Note that Marx also does not share the Hegelian end-of-history claim. The present stage of history is contradictory, and therefore pregnant with the seeds of its own transformation. Marx's theory of history, then, necessarily implies the theory of revolution and future society.

2.8 Conclusion

Marx's inversion of Hegel's dialectic from idealism to materialism, from historical idealism to historical materialism, primarily revolves around the issue of the subject of history. Instead of replacing the Idea with matter or with the notion of "process without a subject," Marx grounds his materialism on the premise that "men make history." The first premise of historical materialism, then, is human activity; humanity is the ultimate active subject and object of history in Marx's historical materialism. This means also that historical materialism does not depart from humanism, as it is commonly assumed.

Moreover, this conception of history does not, strictly speaking, amount to a teleological theory of history. Marx does not assume an inevitable historical development on the basis of an eternal, extraneous, pre-given plan. He assumes a stage theory, which predicts the next stage on the basis of the development and contradictions of the previous one. Since he thinks capitalism is inherently contradictory, and its development is sharpening its own fundamental contradictions, Marx also does not share the Hegelian end-of-history thesis. Finally, Marx criticizes the Hegelian passive, even justificatory, attitude toward human suffering in history.

CHAPTER 3

DIALECTICAL DETERMINATIONS OF THE STRUCTURE OF SOCIETY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Very commonly, Marx's approach to society is called *structural determinism,* the most basic premise of which is the claim that the structure determines the superstructure. The relations of production together with the forces of production constitute the structure, and everything cultural, political, juridical, and ideological belongs to the category of superstructure. This chapter focuses on Marx's general explanation of social structures. The next chapter will explore his explanation of the structure of bourgeois society, and the last two chapters will expound various fundamental aspects of his theory of the superstructure of this form of society.

There exist a host of competing interpretations of Marx's structuralism. This chapter will discuss and challenge three different influential interpretations. It will defend the view that the correct formulation of Marx's structuralism is to be found in his following summary of historical materialism in *The German Ideology*: the "materialist conception of history relies on expounding the real process of production—starting from the material production of life itself . . . " and comprehends "the form of intercourse connected with and created by this mode of production . . . " The phrase "the form of intercourse" means "civil society in its various stages . . . " It follows that the mode the material production of life takes explains the structure (form) of a given society.[1] This is to say, the first

premise of the historical-materialist explanation of society is productive activity (objective activity), that is, "the material production of life itself." If so, Marx's explanation of society is based on the same standpoint he uses to provide a general theory of history (see Chapter 2).

In this regard, my argument coincides with Marcuse's well-judged point that "Marx rests his theories on the assumption that the labor process determines the totality of human existence and thus gives to society its basic pattern . . . In this respect, labor is basic to all forms of society."[2] This argument applies to the concept of structure directly in the sense that the structure consists of the basic pattern social relations take in a given society and that the mode of its labor process ultimately explains the structure of that society.

However, understanding Marx's explanation of social structures requires going beyond the claim that the mode of labor process (human activity) determines the form of social intercourse (structure as social relations) in the final analysis. An adequate interpretation of Marx requires not only setting the record straight on the question of his explanatory "first premise," but also comprehending his explanation through his dialectic method, which is steeped in the philosophy of internal relations. Thus, it is not simply a matter of what determines what, or what category is given priority, but also *how* determinations occur dialectically as processes of internalization. Furthermore, the dialectical determination of different categories is inconceivable unless they are explained as the parts of a given organic social whole.[3] Without grasping these, Marx's explanations appear to be contradictory and, at times, reductionist.

3.2 A Brief Critique of Plekhanov, Cohen, and Althusser

One of the earliest formulations of historical materialism and structural determinism after Marx and Engels can be found in the highly influential works of George V. Plekhanov. He offers a five-stage causal determination, which reads as follows:

> If we wanted to express in a nutshell the view held by Marx and Engels with regard to the relation between the now celebrated "*base*" and the no less celebrated "*superstructure,*" we would get something like the following:
>
> (1) the state of the productive forces;
> (2) the economic relations these forces condition;
> (3) the socio-political system that has developed on the given economic "base";

(4) the mentality of men living in society, a mentality which is determined in part by the economic conditions obtaining, and in part by the entire socio-political system that has arisen on that foundation;
(5) the various ideologies that reflect the properties of that mentality.[4]

Apparently, the first two stages are summed up to constitute the "base," which is also the structure. Based on this outline, Plekhanov attempts to treat structural determinism as a dynamic theory, though he prioritizes the forces of production once again:

> We know that the development of the productive forces . . . in the final analysis determines the development of all social relations . . . But as soon as they have arisen, the social relations themselves exercise a marked influence on the development of the productive forces. Thus, that which is initially an effect becomes in its turn a cause; between the development of productive forces and the social structure there arises an interaction which assumes the most varied forms in various epochs.[5]

One can surmise on the basis of the passages quoted here that there is an "initial" development of the forces of production, which gives rise to the economic relations and, consequently, to the sociopolitical system, which, together with the economic "base," produce the "mentality of men" and the "ideologies" that correspond to this mentality. Once, or "as soon as," the latter moments are produced, they causally interact with the other moments in "most varied forms."

Plekhanov's interactive formulation was a response to the critics of Marxism who accused it of economic reductionism ("economism"). He, however, merely advances the view that accepts the reciprocity among different parts of the social whole. As appealing as this interactive, reciprocal-causality[6] view may sound to the dialectically minded reader, it does not capture Marx's dialectical explanations adequately for several reasons. Marx does not view the social whole, which contains the moments listed by Plekhanov, as a temporal five-step process. The Marxian dialectic method claims that different moments of the social whole develop simultaneously, and not in a temporal-spatial sequence. The temporal-spatial sequence of different moments suggested by Plekhanov also bespeaks of the monadic existence of these moments and consequently their strictly external determination of each other. Marx, as will be discussed, *also* perceives determination as a process of internalization in which the identity ("character") of a specific relation is constituted within what it relates to.

Moreover, Marx does not always prioritize the forces of production, as it has been noted by others. Some critics of Marx, such as H. B. Acton, argue that this shifting of explanatory premises, especially between the forces of production and the relations of production, constitutes a logical contradiction, or philosophical incoherence, on Marx's part.[7] G. A. Cohen tries to resolve these "contradictions," but overlooks that such contradictions do not exist in Marx's thoroughly dialectical philosophy, or they exist only if we impose on him the logic of analytical philosophy and external relations.

Cohen, much like Plekhanov, bestows causal primacy upon the forces of production. His "primacy thesis is that *the nature of a set of production relations* [structure] *is explained by the level of development of the productive forces embraced by it.*"[8] From this follows a second thesis, which essentially says that the nature of the superstructure is explained by the nature of the economic structure. So the sequence of his explanation is as follows: the level of development of the forces of production determines the nature of the structure (social relations), which in turn determines the nature of the superstructure. Of the latter sequence, he repeats elsewhere that "to say that the . . . superstructure *rises* on the economic base is, I believe, a vivid way of saying that the character of the former is explained by the character of the latter."[9] Presumably, this sequence of causality accounts for Marx's historical materialism, or his materialist theory of history and society.

Cohen's approach suffers the same shortcomings observed with Plekhanov's formulations, based on thing/matter determinism,[10] an explanation based strictly on external relations. By "thing determinism," I mean the reduction of the forces of production to things that are forces of production. This form of determinism stems from the analytical method with which Cohen "clarifies" Marx's concepts by reducing them to isolated, single-property entities.

For instance, according to Cohen, "the relations of production constitute the economic structure," but the structure excludes productive forces (productive powers). In his reasoning, "force, or power . . . is not a relation." Thus, power "is not something which holds between objects, but rather a property of an object, or, in an extensive use in which Marx indulges, an object bearing that property, and object having productive power, and such an object is also not a relation."[11] Accordingly, if an object has one property, it cannot also have another property; if it is a bearer of power, it cannot also bear social relations.

By saying that power (force) and relation are two different things, Cohen overlooks that "object bearing that property" of *power* is not reducible to this property, that it may also contain other properties—such as relations, especially when a category is considered from a broader

level of abstraction to capture its more concrete form. Moreover, it is a fundamental philosophical mistake to say that power is "not a relation," since, in Marxian explanations, the power embodied in an instrument of production is always social and relational.

Taking productive forces out of the structure (social relations) can raise the following types of legitimate objections against Cohen's formulation: for Marx, capital, the form forces of production take in capitalism, is also a social relation.[12] Thus, the exclusion of the forces of production from the structure is highly problematic on conceptual, epistemological grounds. The separation of the two concepts in this manner results in constituting their relationship of determination only in an external manner, in which the determining factor exists, in time and space, prior to the determined factor. This is problematic also on ontological grounds. This type of causal explanation cannot accommodate Marx's dialectical explanations, as will be amply demonstrated later in text.

But Cohen also wants to "exclude persons" and their work relations from the economic structure even though he admits that "forces and persons" are the constitutive "terms" of the production relations. Cohen says that he at some point "mistakenly included work relations in the economic structure." His reasoning is that "work relations are *material* relations of production, and being material, they fall outside the economic structure."[13] Thus, what is material cannot also be social. One wonders, then, what the structure as social relations of production would include without the work relations of persons, that is, the relations *in* production, without the forces of production, and without the superstructure.[14] Here, Cohen's historical materialism clearly departs from that of Marx, for whom the work relations of individuals are not only material but also always social. As will be discussed, "work relations" are the most essential internal relations of the forces of production, social relations, and, by extension, all else in Marx's account of the social whole. But Cohen's account has nothing to do with internal relations.

In short, as Sean Sayers very aptly points out,

> Cohen relies on the method of *analysis*. He insists upon analysing the whole that he is considering into its component parts. He insists upon separating and isolating the different elements and aspects of the given concrete totality, and considering and defining these in isolation. The effect of this method is to produce a fragmented and atomised picture of reality.[15]

Moreover, Cohen ultimately offers what Althusser calls a "simple contradiction" theory, a theory that explains revolutionary ruptures and transformation on the basis of the simple contradiction between the forces

of production and relations of production, and consequently between the structure and the superstructure. The terms of contradiction are taken to be separate entities, each containing a single property.

Althusser, whose formulations are much more in-tune with dialectics, argues that the structural and superstructural moments are inseparable from the conditions of existence in which they come to form a unity. Within this unity, various "levels and instances" are determined and determining. Accordingly, Althusser argues that the simple contradiction between the forces of production and the relations of production cannot amount to an adequate explanation of historical as well societal processes and ruptures: the specificity and the overdetermined complexity of the political and historical conditions have to be accounted for.[16]

For Althusser, contradictions that "animate" the social whole "derive from the relations of production." But these relations of production are only "one of the *terms* of the contradiction" within the social whole as well as, simultaneously, "its *conditions of existence.*" Thus, to state his theory of overdetermination,

> the "contradiction" is inseparable from the total structure of the social body in which it is found, inseparable from its formal *conditions* of existence, and even from the instances it governs; it is radically *affected by them,* determining, but also determined in one and the same movement, and determined by the various *levels* and *instances* of the social formation it animates; it might be called *over-determined in its principle.*[17]

Althusser's theory of overdetermination is based on an aspect of the dialectic that exists in Marx's thought. In explaining what this dialectic involves, Althusser very aptly rejects simple determinism. In assessing the relationship between the various components of the "complex structured whole that is society," he states:

> In it, the "relations of production" are not the pure phenomena of the forces of production; they are also their condition of existence. The superstructure is not the pure phenomenon of the structure, it is also its condition of existence. This follows from Marx's principle . . . that production without society, that is, without social relations, exists nowhere; that we can go no deeper than the unity that is the unity of a whole in which, if the relations of production do have production itself as their condition of existence, production has as its condition of existence its form: the relations of production.

In this reciprocal dialectic of overdetermination, Althusser continues to state that

> [the] mutual conditioning of the existence of the "contradictions" does not nullify the structure in dominance that reigns over the contradictions and in them (in this case, determination in the last instance by the economy). Despite its apparent circularity, this conditioning does not result in the destruction of the structure of domination that constitutes the complexity of the whole, and its unity. Quite the contrary, even within the reality of the conditions of existence of each contradiction, it is the manifestation of the structure in dominance that unifies the whole. *This reflection of the conditions of existence of the contradiction within itself, this reflection of the structure articulated in dominance that constitutes the unity of the complex whole within each contradiction,* this is the most profound characteristic of the Marxist dialectic, the one I have tried recently to encapsulate in the concept of "*overdetermination.*"[18]

Because of this formulation, Althusser's approach is often rightly identified with dialectical structuralism, since for him the structure is the dominant moment in "the final analysis." It is this dominant moment that provides the unity of different parts within the whole.

However, Althusser underemphasizes internal relations in his opposition to Hegel's emphasis on them. Althusser convincingly argues that "a Hegelian contradiction is never *really overdetermined,* even though it frequently has all the appearances of being so." The complexity of Hegelian contradictions is "not the complexity of an *effective overdetermination,* but the complexity of a cumulative *internalisation* which is only apparently an overdetermination." In other words, Hegelianism does not have effective overdetermination because it has "no true external determination." For example, "*A circle of circles, consciousness has only one centre,* which solely determines it; it would need circles *with another centre than itself—decentred circles*—for it to be affected at its centre by their effectivity, in short for its essence to be over-determined by them. But this is not the case."[19]

This is a very significant insight, but unfortunately it comes at the full expense of the processes of internalization. Because of this mistake, Althusser ends up treating different moments of the totality as circles with isolated centers. In Marx's dialectical system, however, each aspect of the totality that overdetermines the others actually internally contains what is being determined, and the dominance of the whole by the process of production (Althusser attributes this role to social relations of production) occurs as a process of internalization.[20] It follows that dialectical determination is also a process that requires activity. By dismissing the notion of human subject, or any subject (see Chapter 2), Althusser cannot account for the real basis of determination as a process, that is, "the material production of life," conducted by the human subject.

3.3 EXPLAINING THE FAMOUS PASSAGE: THE FIRST PREMISE AND INTERNAL RELATIONS

Many interpretations of Marx's historical materialism remain within the confines of the following passage, which is a brief summary that provides inadequate information for the conceptualization of Marx's social whole. Even then, this passage is often inadequately read. A well-known part of it says:

> In the social production of their life, men enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will, relations of production, which correspond to a definite stage of development of their material productive forces. The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation, on which rises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production of material life conditions the social, political and the intellectual life process in general.[21]

Before exploring the complicated nature of Marx's concepts and their interactions implicated in this passage, some general observations must be made. Let us start with Marx's own comment on the passage, made in *Capital*.

> I seize this opportunity of shortly answering an objection taken by a German paper in America, to my work, "Zur Kritik der Pol. Oekonomie, 1859." In the estimation of that paper, my view that each special mode of production and the social relations corresponding to it, in short, that the economic structure of society, is the real basis on which the juridical and political superstructure is raised and to which definite social forms of thought correspond; that the mode of production determines the character of the social, political, and intellectual life generally, all this is very true for our own times, in which material interests preponderate, but not for the middle ages, in which Catholicism, nor for Athens and Rome, where politics, reigned supreme . . . This much . . . is clear that the middle ages could not live on Catholicism, nor the ancient world on politics. On the contrary, it is the mode in which they gained a livelihood that explains why here politics, and there Catholicism, played the chief part. For the rest, it requires but a slight acquaintance with the history of the Roman republic, for example, to be aware that its secret history is the history of its landed property. On the other hand, Don Quixote long ago paid the penalty for wrongly imagining that knight errantry was compatible with all economic forms of society.[22]

Both passages establish a correlation between structure and superstructure. The most straightforward point he makes in both of them is that the

superstructure must be compatible with the structure. "Knightly errantry" is not compatible with the bourgeois social relations, and "it is the mode in which" societies "gained a livelihood that explains . . . politics." Note that the conclusions he offers are in response to the approaches that perceive politics as universal forms. Note also that Marx's statements cited here do not necessarily render political moments absolutely impotent (Chapter 6 will show how the contrary is true), even if he does not say anything on their effectivity in this passage.

In both passages, Marx uses the words "correspond," "condition," and "determines." To repeat, he says that "the mode of production determines the character of the social, political, and intellectual life generally." Crucially so, Marx speaks of the determination of the "character of the social, political, and intellectual life generally." Thus, as Cohen also notes, "to say that the . . . superstructure *rises* on the economic base is, I believe, a vivid way of saying that the character of the former is explained by the character of the latter." [23] If the character of something is necessarily related to its internal properties that constitute its nature, Marx seems to have internal relations in mind. Cohen does not consider this. Marx seems to be speaking here, in other words, of the internal determination of the identity of structure and superstructure. Reading these passages further endorses this tentative conclusion, as will be discussed.

Second, when Marx says, "the economic structure of society," in the second passage, he clearly includes "the mode of production and the social relations corresponding to it." We shall observe later that the forces of production are also included. Without concluding too much on the basis of these comments, we can safely say that the boundaries between these concepts are not clearly drawn. They are not neatly isolated from the rest. The reasons for this will be explained later.

Both passages quoted here also give primacy to the activity of production, and not to the relations and forces of production. The second one states, "the mode of production determines the character of the social, political, and intellectual life generally." The first one says the same thing with more precision: "The mode of production of material life conditions the social, political and the intellectual life process in general."[24] Marx, thus, prioritizes the "production of material life." The activity of producing the material life, or what Marx also calls "life process" or "objective-activity," or "industry"[25]as Mészáros prefers to call it, is given priority. Cohen and others replace production as activity with the forces of production as things in establishing the first premise of Marx's historical materialism.

These are not the only two times Marx makes this prioritization. In the passage from *The German Ideology,* quoted in the Introduction

of this chapter, Marx states that the materialist conception of history "relies on expounding the real process of production—starting from the material production of life itself . . . " and comprehends "the form of intercourse connected with and created by this mode of production, i.e., civil society in its various stages, as the basis of all history."[26] Thus, in the *logical* sequence of Marx's explanation, the activity of production, or the process of production, is prioritized. This is a logical sequence in the sense that, according to Marx, (a) there is no production process in the absence of a society and forces of production and (b) these categories cannot be so neatly isolated from one another, since they are internally related.

These considerations also apply to the relationship between the structure and the superstructure, even in the famous passage quoted earlier in which Marx states that the "sum total of the relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation, on which rises a legal and political superstructure." In order to comprehend this statement adequately, we must read what comes immediately after it. Marx continues, "At a certain stage of their development, the material productive forces of society come in conflict with the existing relations of production, or—what is but a legal expression for the same thing—with the property relations within which they have been at work hitherto."[27] The main objective of this statement is to explain why transitions from one mode of society to another occur. Clearly, such transitions have something to do with the conflict that arises between the forces of production and social relations. The gist of Marx's argument here is that, at a certain point in their development, the forces and relations of production no longer correspond to each other. The pursuit of this line of his argument would require us to discuss his theory of revolution, which is not our concern here.

What we are concerned with is the manner in which Marx associates structural categories with those of the superstructure. The relations of production, we are told, also include the "property relations." The former is, in some sense, "the same thing" as the latter, or the latter is "a legal expression" of the former.[28] The relations of production, Marx says, have been "at work" "within" the legal relations. This can only mean that Marx is observing an internal-relation determination here, that is, the internalization of the structural relations by the political-superstructural ones.

Marx elsewhere expresses this as a process in which the "relations of production develop," somewhat unevenly, "as legal relations."[29] Thus, the production relations develop also *as* legal property relations by working within them. One moment develops not simply by interacting with the

other, but also *as*[30] the other.[31] It is on the basis of this understanding that Marx also says: "The *political* relationships of men are of course also *social, societal* relationships, like all relations between men and men. All questions that concern the relations of men with each other are therefore also social questions."[32]

As we have discussed, Cohen offers the opposite view by stating that work relations are material relations and must be excluded from social relations. With such comments, Marx offers an extension of the concept of production relations to include legal-political relations (superstructure), and vice versa. This move allows Marx to express one-sided concepts in a more concrete, developed form, that is, in their many-sidedness. Looked from this angle, it would not be amiss to say that the whole society, including its legal relations, is a force of production.

These discussions strongly suggest that, in terms of causality (determination), for Marx, cause and effect are not, ontologically speaking, completely separate things, as they are for Cohen and others. In response to Fredrich List's assumption, which parallels their view, Marx says,

> if the effect is different from the cause, must not the nature of the effect be contained already in the cause? The cause must already carry with it the determining feature that is manifested later in the effect. Herr List's philosophy goes as far as knowing that cause and effect are "something quite different"
>
> The cause is in no way superior to the *effect.* The effect is merely the openly *manifested* cause.[33]

To say that the effect manifests the cause is like saying that they are in some sense identical, in spite of their differences, and that the effect contains the cause. This theory of causality is unmistakably guided by the philosophy of internal relations and must be acknowledged every time one attributes to Marx a theory of causality.

By examining the famous passage, and a bit more, we have arrived at the following conclusions: (a) the first premise of Marx's explanation of society is the activity of production and (b) when Marx says something "determines," or "conditions," or "corresponds to" something else, he primarily has in mind internal-relation determinations through which cause and effect become one. From these conclusions follow the requirements that Marx's concepts cannot be understood through the method of isolation and that determination is, significantly so, a question of essence and identity.

3.4 DIALECTICAL UNITY OF THE FORCES OF PRODUCTION AND SOCIAL RELATIONS

In formulating his own account of the primacy thesis of historical materialism, G. A. Cohen assumes that the complicated nature of Marx's approach could be explained by the lack of "time, or the will, or the academic peace" he did not enjoy.[34] In the analytical manner discussed earlier in text, Cohen proceeds to "straighten" out Marx's ideas and concepts to provide clarity. What he overlooks in the process is that Marx deliberately avoided providing precise definitions. This is because defining something necessarily requires establishing definite, fixed boundaries around it, whereas Marx's dialectical approach, like Hegel's, assumes the "fluidity" of facts and concepts.[35]

Dialectic method finds it problematic to operate on the basis of fixed definitions.[36] It establishes definitions only to shatter them by showing that the defined object is also, to use the Hegelian terminology, "an other." The complicated nature of Marx's categories, then, must be explained by his deliberate attempt to treat his subject matter dialectically, despite Engels's warnings that such an attempt would make his thoughts difficult to understand for his readers.[37]

As Ollman forcefully reminds us,

> Most accounts of Marxism try very hard to . . . define neatly and permanently the boundaries that subdivide the structures into which Marx organizes human existence. However, given . . . Marx's practice of abstracting extension and his philosophy of internal relations, it should be clear that this is a fruitless exercise. It is only because they assume that Marx is operating with a philosophy of external relations in which the boundaries between things are taken to be of the same order as their other sense-perceptible qualities (hence determined and discoverable once and for all) that these critics can so consistently dismiss the overwhelming evidence of Marx's practice. Not only does Marx often redraw the boundaries . . . , but with every classification there are instances where his abstractions are large enough to contain most or even all of the qualities that seem to fall into other contrasting units. [38]

This dialectical treatment naturally holds true of Marx's articulation of the categories of forces of production and social relations, too. This section will demonstrate not only that the analytical clarifications of Marx's concepts are futile but also that the forces of production ultimately bear the characteristics of the social relations of production, which are derived from the activity of production. In other words, these forces are not simply forces or powers, but are simultaneously relations.

The famous passage simply implies that relations of production "correspond" to the forces of production. Certain other passages in Marx's writings, when read in isolation and analytically, lend themselves to forces of production determinism. In another oft-quoted passage in which the structure is said to be determined by the changes in the forces of production, as Cohen and many others observe, Marx says, "In acquiring new productive forces men change their mode of production; and in changing their mode of production, in changing the way of earning their living, they change all their social relations. The hand-mill gives you society with the feudal lord; the steam-mill, society with the industrial capitalist."[39] This statement even became the self-explanatory title of an article, "The Handmill Gives You the Feudal Lord: Marx's Technological Determinism."[40]

In the passage just quoted, it appears that social relations, in some sense of order, come after the forces of production, though the process (labor) of "acquiring" the forces of production seems to suggest its own primacy over such forces. Nothing in this passage, or elsewhere, suggests that the causal direction is limited to explaining how the development of the forces of production determines the relations of production, or that the latter are merely the functions of the former. What is emphasized here is *one* of the movements of the dialectical circularity of two moments within the social whole reciprocally interacting with each other.[41] The reason for this emphasis is that, according to Marx, Pierre-Joseph Proudhon overlooks it.

We need not delve too deeply into the pages of *Capital,* for instance, to find many passages in which Marx also explains the development of the forces of production as a response to the changes in the relations of production. The passage just quoted itself comes from *The Poverty of Philosophy,* in which Marx criticizes Proudhon for engendering every relation out of the previous one in a single-time sequence (see later in text). Thus, Marx himself cannot be proposing this kind of logic in establishing a relationship between the forces and relations of production.

Indeed, the sentence preceding the quoted passage reads, "Social relations are closely bound up with productive forces," and the one before this sentence tells Proudhon that men, social relations, and products all reproduce one another.[42] Using the same terminology about 20 pages later, Marx also says, "The hand-mill presupposes a different division of labour from the steam-mill. Thus, it is slapping history in the face to want to begin by the division of labour in general, in order to get subsequently to a specific instrument of production, machinery." The whole discussion, then, is directed against Proudhon's attempt to explain the development of the instruments of production merely from an eternal concept (idea)

of division of labor, which in reality always exists in a historically determined, particular form. Marx reminds him that "The modern workshop, which depends on the application of machinery, is a social production relation, an economic category." What, then, explains the development of machinery, this specific form of productive force, as a "social production relation"? Marx says there are many "circumstances which contributed simultaneously to the development of manufacturing industry." Briefly put, "The growth of the market, the accumulation of capital, the modification in the social position of the classes, a large number of persons being deprived of their sources of income, all these are historical preconditions for the formation of manufacture." Thus, if one wants to put causality in a historical time sequence, the development of the forces of production has its own "preconditions" as much as it itself becomes the precondition of the changes in relations of production. From the vantage point of division of labor, which is as much a social relation of production as it is a force of production, Marx concludes, "As the concentration of instruments develops, the division develops also, and *vice versa.* This is why every big mechanical invention is followed by a greater division of labour, and each increase in the division of labour gives rise in turn to new mechanical inventions."[43]

Thus, for Marx, social relations determine the forces of production and the forces of production determine the relations of production in a reciprocal manner. It is also clear that such determinations must be comprehended in their larger context, the whole in which they develop, including the growth of the markets and so on.

But, once again, the forces and social relations of production, like all dialectically related moments, are internally related. As will be discussed, Marx "defines" capital, "among other things," as means/force of production. He also says repeatedly that capital is a social relation. If the structure is the "sum total of the relations of production," as seen earlier, and if capital is a force of production that contains social relations, the boundary between the forces and the relations of production cannot be rigidly established on Marx's behalf. Marx's main emphasis in this regard is on establishing the dialectical unity of these concepts, while acknowledging that the "*dialectic of the concept productive force* (means of production) *and relations of production* . . . does not suspend [their] difference." [44] For this reason, apart from their difference, the forces of production are social relations that constitute forces of production. It follows that capital is not simply an object or an objective relation of production, since production relations are "manifested in" it and lend it "a specific social character,"[45] as capital's essence. This essence explains the difference between the instruments of production in general and the capital in particular.

Some of these points are summed up in the following passage, well worth noting. Marx says, "Wakefield discovered that in the Colonies, property in money, means of subsistence, machines, and other means of production, does not as yet stamp a man a capitalist." This means that capital is in part private property, and thus also a property relation, but a person merely owning the elements of the means of production is not yet a capitalist, or he or she is one only potentially. This is because the person does not yet own actual capital, since the things he or she owns are "wanting the correlative—the wage worker, the other man who is compelled to sell himself of his own free-will." For this reason, Wakefield, unlike Cohen, "discovered that capital is not a thing, but a social relation between persons, established by the instrumentality of things."[46] Capital, then, is also, or rather *essentially,* an alienated social relation,[47] which the *thing* moment of capital establishes (mediates) instrumentally.

In brief, without accounting for the specific relation that particularizes the abstractly general, such as instruments of production, division of labor, or accumulated labor as such, the particular, i.e. the particularization of the abstractly general in bourgeois society, the concept of capital cannot be adequately understood. Marx tells us elsewhere that, "Capital is, among other things, an instrument of production, also past, objectified labour. Consequently (modern economists say) capital is a universal and eternal relation given by nature—that is provided that one omits precisely those specific factors which turn the 'instruments of production' or 'accumulated labour' into capital."[48] It is precisely these "specific factors" (alienated labor and relations in production corresponding to it) that Wakefield discovers to be lacking in his effort to become a capitalist. Capital, then, "among other things," is a historically specific social-production relation.[49] The latter distinguishes capital from all instruments of production in general throughout history, or establishes the particularity of capital as a force of production in bourgeois society.

Although capital is a social relation, according to Marx, it *appears,* due to fetishism, as an independent thing:

> Since living labour is incorporated into capital—through the exchange between capital and the worker—since it appears as an activity belonging to capital, as soon as the labour process starts, all the productive powers of social labour present themselves as productive powers of capital, just as the general social form of labour appears in money as the quality of a thing. Thus the productive power of social labour, and the specific forms of it, now present themselves as productive powers and forms of capital, of *objectified* labour, of the objective conditions of labour, which—as such an independent entity—are personified in the capitalist and confront living labour. Here once again we have the inversion of the

> relation, the expression of which we have already characterised as *fetishism* in considering the nature of money.[50]

The "living labor," through relations in production, is "incorporated into capital" and becomes its essential internal relation. Because the living labor is exchanged as a commodity through "the exchange between capital and the worker," an inversion occurs in such a way that capital appears as an independent force. The next chapter will discuss in more detail that this fetishistic inversion is due to alienation. In this context we conclude that capital, in reality, is a social relation of alienated labor and labor power, which becomes incorporated into capital through the exchange between capital and the worker. Also, "the materialisation of the social features of production . . . " into capital is a process in which the "objective conditions," as well as the "subjective conditions," of capital are formed into a totality.[51]

The relationship between these objective and subjective conditions, once again, is reciprocal/circular. Capital contains two interrelated aspects: "the objective means, the objective conditions of production" and "the subjective condition of production" (labor power, activity, and relations).[52] In terms of the sequence of explanation, "Those conditions, like these relations, are on the one hand prerequisites, on the other hand results and creations of the capitalist process of production; they are produced and reproduced by it."[53] Likewise, Marx says, "*capital presupposes wage labour; wage labour presupposes capital. They reciprocally condition the existence of each other; they reciprocally bring forth each other.*"[54] They do so in a process of internalization.

Elsewhere, Marx explains this dialectical circularity and the process of internalization in greater detail and with better coherence:

> In so far as labour is objectified in the production process, it is objectified as *capital,* as not-labour, and in so far as capital yields itself up in the exchange to the worker, it only turns into the means of reproducing his *labour capacity.* At the end of the process, therefore, its original conditions, its original factors and their original [mutual] relation, are again in place. The relation of *capital and wage labour is* therefore reproduced by this mode of production just as much as commodities and surplus value are produced. All that emerges at the end of the process is what entered at the start: on the one hand objectified labour as capital, on the other hand objectless labour as mere labour capacity, so that the same exchange is constantly repeated afresh.[55]

Here, the dialectic of circularity is utilized in a richer way than in the earlier quote. What this passage suggests in one respect is that labor is an

internal relation of capital, or capital contains objectified wage labor as well as the subjectivity of labor. It also speaks of the "mutual relation" of capital and labor. This means that one cannot strictly ascribe to capital, and hence to forces of production, the role of external causality and causal primacy.[56]

But a deeper understanding of the dialectic of circularity requires capturing the fact that it involves the dialectic of opposites (labor as "not-capital," etc.) being metamorphosed into each other through a process of negation, which is the mode of movement and development in the circular dialectic.[57] This movement of the dialectic will be further elaborated later in the text.

3.5 Dialectical Determinations of the Social Whole and Its Parts

If all the objective and subjective, material and social, parts are internally related, and exist in a circular and reciprocal process, then their relationship to each other cannot be arbitrary or anarchic. They must be held together in a systematic, organic whole. The dialectic of the whole and its parts is essential for understanding Marx's system.[58]

Shortly before the publication of *Capital,* Marx explains to Engels in a letter,

> I cannot bring myself to send anything off until I have the whole thing in front of me. Whatever shortcomings they may have, the advantage of my writings is that they are an artistic whole, and this can only be attained by my method of never having things printed until I have them in front of me *in their entirety.* This is impossible with Jacob Grimm's method which is in general better with writings that have no dialectical structure.[59]

The dialectical structure of Marx's thought, then, is related to expressing the truth as an "artistic whole." This suggests two interrelated things. First, when reading Marx, we must realize that each component of Marx's discussions is designed to make fuller sense within the whole system of his thought. In other words, isolating a component of his thought from the whole would amount to reading him incorrectly. Second, the method he describes in the passage just quoted is not simply an epistemological one. Marx thinks that the social universe he is describing consists of an organic, living whole, whose parts exist as the integral parts of this whole.

However, Marx's dialectic method often begins with basic concepts. With the method of extension, he develops them into more comprehensive ("richer," "concrete") ones. This is often done by establishing

necessary relations among phenomena. In so doing, this method furnishes the truth of a specific phenomenon in more complete ways, since, as Hegel would have it, "The truth is the whole."[60] Therefore, a goal of dialectical reasoning is to seek the truth of a concept, or its corresponding reality, through its relationship to the system in which it exists by explaining the inner relationship of different parts.

However, an important clarification must be made in this context. Marx's point of departure from the simple, basic concepts, such as value, commodity, money, capital, and so forth, toward richer, more "concrete" conceptualizations, such as structure, mode of production, organic whole, is an epistemological prioritization.

> The concrete is concrete because it is a synthesis of many determinations, thus a unity of the diverse. In thinking, it therefore appears as a process of summing-up, as a result, not as the starting point, although it is the real starting point, and thus also the starting point of perception and conception. The first procedure attenuates the comprehensive visualization to abstract determinations, the second leads from abstract determinations by way of thinking to the reproduction of the concrete.

This consideration, according to Marx, also explains Hegel's idealism:

> Hegel accordingly arrived at the illusion that real was the result of thinking synthesising itself within itself, delving ever deeper into itself and moving by its inner motivation; actually the method of advancing from the abstract to the concrete is simply the way in which thinking assimilates the concrete and reproduces it as a mental concrete.

In brief, the method of developing the abstract into the concrete whole is useful for epistemological purposes of comprehension and explanation. However, ontologically speaking, the development of the abstract into concrete determination,

> is by no means the process by which the concrete itself originates. For example, the simplest economic category, e.g. exchange value, presupposes population, population which produces under definite conditions, as well as a distinct type of family, or community, or State etc. Exchange value [as an abstract category, for instance] can never exist except as an abstract, one-sided relation of an already existing concrete, living whole.[61]

The next chapter will discuss how Marx develops his theory of the exchange value of commodities as an integral part of the whole bourgeois system of production. The point for now is that a one-sided

determination cannot exist apart from the whole, which, Marx tells us in a Hegelian fashion, is a "living whole." We should not conclude from this discussion, however, that the whole exists temporally prior to its parts. In fact, the dialectic method requires their relationship to be simultaneous. If so, the development of different parts into each other and into the whole cannot be perceived as simple time sequence.

One of the most succinct accounts of his dialectic of the whole and its parts is presented by Marx in his polemic against Proudhon, the same polemic in which, as seen earlier, he lectures Proudhon on the conceptualization of the division of labor as a universal concept. According to Marx, in order to explain each moment, one has to have "recourse to all the other relations of society." This is exactly what Proudhon is also compelled to do, though not without problems. According to Marx, Proudhon takes the constitution of value as the primary standpoint of explaining economic evolutions and attempts to engender all relations out of the concept of value. He, thus, not only begins with abstractly general concepts, instead of real, historical relations as Marx does, but also explains the development of other determinations as phenomena arising out of value in a time sequence. As Marx explains, "Thus, to arrive at the constitution of value, which for him is the basis of all economic evolutions, he could not do without division of labour, competition, etc. Yet in the *series,* in the *understanding* of M. Proudhon, in the *logical sequence,* these relations did not yet exist." This is because "M. Proudhon considers economic relations as so many social phases, engendering one another, resulting one from the other like the antithesis from the thesis . . . " When he

> comes to examine a single one of these phases, M. Proudhon cannot explain it without having recourse to all the other relations of society; which relations, however, he has not yet made his dialectic movement engender. When, after that, M. Proudhon, by means of pure reason, proceeds to give birth to these other phases, he treats them as if they were new-born [babies]. He forgets that they are of the same age as the first.

Thus,

> In constructing the edifice of an ideological system by means of the categories of political economy, the limbs of the social system are dislocated. The different limbs of society are converted into so many separate societies, following one upon the other. How, indeed, could the single logical formula of movement, of sequence, of time, explain the structure of society, in which all relations coexist simultaneously and support one another?[62]

On the basis of this explanation, we shall take Marx's general approach to the structure of a society to be based on the following: "The production

relations of every society form a whole." These relations constitute the structure of society, and in "the structure of society, . . . all relations coexist simultaneously and support one another." We shall later explain the reason why, and the manner in which, Marx calls the structure of society "the production relations." For now, we note that, with this formulation, Marx adopts Hegel's notion of the "organic whole" in which every moment is both "differentiated" and as "mutually necessary" [63] as the others, though, as Hook and Rader justly remind us, respectively: "Marxian totality is social and limited by other totalities, while the Hegelian totality is metaphysical and unlimited" and "Marx left speculations about the whole cosmos to Engels."[64]

Thus, the explanatory "first premise" of the social whole should be conceived as a logical premise, and not a temporal and merely an external one,[65] since every component is of the "same age" and is internally related. Of importance is also Marx's warning that a "single logical formula of movement, of sequence, of time" cannot adequately capture the complex interaction of different moments within the whole. Said differently, Marx does not engender different moments of the social whole out of the previously existing ones in a time sequence, nor does he dislocate the "limbs of the social system" as Proudhon does (also Plekhanov and Cohen in their own ways). The most basic dialectical explanations for the stand Marx takes are that no single, one-sided moment can exist and develop alone, in time and space, unless it exists within an organic whole and in a dialectical relationship with the other moments that give it a sufficiently concrete determination. No moment is an isolated sphere, or a "separate society."

3.6 THE CIRCULARITY AND RECIPROCITY OF THE SPHERES OF THE STRUCTURE

Given these dialectical premises, the causal interactions among different moments are necessarily reciprocal and circular. I have alluded to this several times earlier in text. Later in the chapter, I will discuss them more directly, though some clarifications beforehand would be useful. A *reciprocal* relation, or determination, applies to the interactions of two or more parts, such as the relationship between labor and capital. A *circular* determination refers to the dialectical movement in which, say, wage labor eventually becomes capital and returns to itself again. This is a process of *internalized becoming* that requires various spheres of movement (process), the most fundamental of which are the spheres of production, distribution, and consumption, which are connected and cyclical processes. Marx calls the repetition of this cycle the process of reproduction. The structure

of society is a process in which production relations are mediated in and through these spheres and the parts moving through them cyclically.

When considering the whole, then, Marx explains it as "the reciprocal action of [the] various sides on one another."[66] The theory of "reciprocal action" of different moments on one another has to be understood on two different grounds: first, as an "*active connection,*" that is, an "*internal* relation,"[67] and, second, as a dialectical circle in which each moment is simultaneously the prerequisite and the result of the others. The second type of dialectical movement, in its logic, parallels Hegel's notion of philosophy as a circle, without adopting its idealism. According to Hegel, "Philosophy forms a circle. It has an initial or immediate point—for it must begin somewhere—a point which is not demonstrated and is not a result. But the starting point of philosophy is immediately relative, for it must appear at another end-point as a result."[68] Marx's explanations of the social whole often follow this dialectical logic, which necessarily operates simultaneously with the first one.

As stated earlier, the circular movement of becoming occurs within several spheres, extending from production to consumption, the *logical* beginning and end point of the whole process of reproduction, and therefore of social relations mediated through them as production, exchange, and consumption relations.

In the first instance, Marx tells us that different moments are in some sense the same: "Production is thus directly consumption, consumption is directly production." This has to do with each being the active, internal relation of the other. However, also "Each is immediately its opposite"; that is, each is also a dialectical difference.[69] This comment is based on the understanding that the process of reproduction assumes a circular-reciprocal motion in which different parts are reproduced as both identical and opposites of themselves; they posit each other simultaneously as an external object and internal need, and therefore engage in mutual formation and transcendence. The statement "Production is consumption," then, constitutes a dialectical contradiction, a relation of identity and difference simultaneously. As mentioned before, such contradictions, according to the Hegelian-Marxian dialectic, necessitate a circular process of mediation.

Such a process is exactly what Marx has in mind when he says, "a mediating movement takes place between the two," whereby each relation is mediated through the other:

> Production mediates consumption, for which it produces the material; consumption without production would have no object. But consumption also mediates production, by providing for the products the subject

> for whom they are products. The product only attains its final FINISH in consumption. A railway on which no one travels, which is therefore not used up, not consumed, is only a railway dunamei [potentially], not in reality. Without production, there is no consumption; but without consumption there is no production either, since in that case production would be useless.
>
> Consumption produces production in two ways.
>
> (1) In that only through consumption does a product become a real product . . . (I)n other words, a product as distinct from a mere natural object, manifests itself as a product, *becomes* a product, only in consumption. It is only consumption that, by dissolving the product, gives it the FINISHING STROKE, for [the result of] production is a product not merely as objectified activity, but only as an object for the active subject.
> (2) In that consumption creates the need for *new* production, and therefore the ideal, intrinsically actuating reason for production, which is the presupposition of production. Consumption produces the urge to produce, and creates the object which determines the purpose of production. If it is evident that production supplies the object of consumption externally, it is equally evident that consumption *posits* the object of production *ideally,* as an internal image, a need, an urge and a purpose. Consumption furnishes the objects of production in a form that is still subjective. No production without need. But consumption reproduces the need.[70]

The interactions of these moments and movements are summed up by Marx as several dialectical tendencies. Even though Marx is considering production and consumption in this context, these tendencies apply to the relations of all the spheres within the structural whole, as we shall see later. First is the "direct identity" of opposites expressed in the notion that "production is consumption; consumption is production." Second, each moment is mutually dependent on the other, which means both that (a) each is "a means of the other" and (b) each is "mediated" by the other. This further means that they are in a "movement through which they are brought into mutual relation and appear to be indispensable to each other, but nevertheless remain external to each other." It follows that their internal relation does not do away with their external relation to each other. But "Each of them is not only directly the other, nor does [each] merely mediate the other, but each of the two . . . creates the other . . . " Since each moment is also somewhat "directly the other," each creating

the other means that it also "creates itself as the other."[71] Production creates itself as consumption in a process in which alienated living labor creates itself as dead, accumulated labor (capital) in an incessant cycle of reproduction.

These dialectical considerations must include two other spheres of movement necessary for the completion of the structure as a whole: distribution and exchange (or circulation), which in *logical* sequence dialectically stand in between production and consumption. It is worth noting that "circulation is a definite moment of exchange, or it is also exchange regarded in its totality." Marx says, "Since *exchange* is only a mediating moment linking production and distribution (which is determined by production) with consumption; since consumption moreover itself appears as a moment of production, exchange is obviously also comprised in production as one of its moments." The way these moments are linked follows the explanation Marx provided (discussed earlier in this chapter) for the link between production and consumption, and need not be repeated once again.

All in all, these spheres collectively comprise the processes of the social structure. We will see in the next chapter that these spheres relate to each other, in bourgeois society, through the production, circulation, and consumption of commodities into capital, that is, through the realization of their value. If so, the forces of production contain the relations mediated and articulated within the spheres of production, circulation, and consumption.

3.7 The Dominant Moment and the Identity of the Structure

This section attempts to answer three interrelated questions: If the dialectical movement is circular, what then becomes of the claims of the "first premise" and the "dominant moment" I have been proposing? What is the relationship between the first premise as the dominant moment and the identity of the whole? How does Marx explain the dialectical similarity and difference between the general and the particular social whole?

After explaining the reciprocal and circular dialectical motion in which one moment is internalized by the other, Marx reiterates that these are the "moments of a process in which production is the actual point of departure, and hence also the dominant moment." This reiteration applies logically to a given social whole in its developed form, and not necessarily to its initial historical formation. But why is production the point of departure, and how does it become the dominant moment? Even

though consumption is "as a necessity, as a need, an intrinsic moment of productive activity," productive activity is "the point where realisation begins." This makes productive activity the "dominant moment," not merely because it is the point of departure of realization, but also because it is its active energy. By being so, the activity of production becomes the "act epitomising the entire process."[72] This process of epitomizing means that the activity of production is constituted as the essence of every moment within the whole.[73] It thus imposes its identity on the rest.

It follows, in Marx's own words, that

> The result at which we arrive is . . . that . . . production, distribution, exchange and consumption are . . . all elements of a totality, differences within a unity. Production is the dominant moment . . . Production *in its one-sided form,* however is in its turn determined by the other moments . . . A change in distribution changes production . . . Lastly, production is determined by the needs of consumption. There is an interaction between the different moments. This is the case with any organic entity.[74]

Here Marx is offering an important additional piece of information. The dominant moment is "production *in its one-sided form*" refers to production as *not* distribution, *not* exchange, and *not* consumption, but production abstracted at a narrower level purely as activity, purely as difference. The most immediate social relation of production as such is relations *in* production. The relations *in* production is the dominant relation of all other relations (distribution, exchange, and consumption), which Marx collectively calls the relations *of* production, even though, confusingly, he sometimes calls the former relation also relations *of* production. Activity of production, which immediately becomes a relation in production, is the *essential* moment of the social whole, the moment that actively gives this whole both its own identity by "epitomising the whole process" and its first premise ("point of departure," or its "point of realization").

Thus far, we have discussed the issue at hand from a very general level of abstraction, which is both useful and not useful. As Marx explains,

> when we speak of production, we always have in mind a definite stage of social development, production by social individuals. It might therefore seem that, in order to speak of production at all, we must either trace the historical process of development in its various phases, or else declare at the very beginning that we are dealing with one particular historical epoch, for instance with modern bourgeois production, which is indeed

> our real subject matter. All epochs of production, however, have some features in common, certain common determinations. *Production in general* is an abstraction, but a reasonable abstraction insofar as it actually emphasizes and defines the common aspects and thus spares us the need of repetition.[75]

This general abstraction, which considers things from the most general historical vantage point, comes across elsewhere, though with additional insight. As Marx says,

> If the labour process is viewed entirely abstractly, it can be said that originally only two factors come into play—man and nature. (Labour and the natural material of labour.) His first tools are his own limbs, and even these he must first appropriate for himself. Only with the first product that is employed for new production—even if it is just a stone thrown at an animal to kill it—does the labour process [production] proper begin . . . To this extent, from the point of view of labour, Franklin is right to define man as "a tool-making animal" or "engineer." The earth and labour would then be the original factors of production; the products destined for labour, produced material of labour, means of labour, means of subsistence, would only be derivative factors.[76]

The statement that all the other factors are the "derivative factors" of the activity of production (labor) cannot be overemphasized, that is, if we want to get to the bottom of things with Marx's explanations. One should also not overlook that labor itself here is expressed as the derivative factor of human nature, an idea already explored in Chapter 1, and must remember every time one speaks of production, consumption, or human interaction in general with nature through which life is reproduced in a circular process.

Before we can make fuller sense of the logic of the derivative factors, we must further discuss the dialectic of essence and appearance (see Chapter 1 for more discussion). Marx's intended outline for *Capital* includes five major themes: (a) the general, "abstract determinants" of all forms of society; (b) the determinants of the "internal structure" of bourgeois society; (c) the state as the "epitome" of bourgeois society; (d) international character of production; and (e) world market and crisis.[77] His interpreters have generally used this information to note that Marx never completed *Capital,* which, in three lengthy volumes, does not even complete (b). Others have emphasized the fact that Marx intended to write about the state. These are legitimate conclusions, but they generally miss the dialectical structure of Marx's outline, and therefore of his historical materialism.

What we are concerned with here is the relationship between (a) and (b), which assumes that the general determinants are particularized into historically definite determinants in bourgeois society. This means that they appear in particularized forms, though their essence (the general) is retained within them.

As seen earlier, "man and nature" are the two most general determinants, and their interaction encapsulates the whole. Once we break these down to their constituent parts, we get objective activity, needs, social relations (cooperation through division of labor), the instruments of production, and products. In bourgeois society, these determinants assume a particular, historically specific form. For instance, activity becomes alienated activity (wage labor), social relations become bourgeois relations, instruments of production become capital, products of labor turn into commodities, and so on. The point we wish to further elaborate in the next few paragraph is that the particularized determinants cannot be adequately understood without the general (essential) determinants, of which human activity is the "point of actualization." In other words, the general and particular exist simultaneously in a dialectical unity.

As it turns out, the difference in the mode of the activity of production provides the most fundamental explanation for the difference between the particularized structures of different societies and their major determinants. As Marx says in *Capital,* "The essential difference between the various economic forms of society, between, for instance, a society based on slave labor, and one based on wage labor, lies only in the mode in which the surplus labor is in each case extracted from the actual producer, the labourer."[78]

Thus, at a narrower level of abstraction pertaining to capitalist society, a definite historical form existing in a definite stage—the logic of which parallels the more general abstraction stated earlier, Marx says, "wage labour is . . . a necessary condition for the formation of capital and it remains the constant, necessary prerequisite for capitalist production."[79] He repeats the immediate other side of the same thought, that is, from the angle of relations *in* production, in *Capital,* Vol. 3: "the relation between capital and wage labour determines the entire character of the mode of production."[80] The relations in production emanating from the activity of production for Marx, to use Hegel's terminology, are the immanent "substance" of the "temporal and transient" [81] moments of the mode of production, and this social totality as a whole, or it is "the soul which holds everything together and which arrives at its own differentiation only through an immanent process."[82]

Finally, we must reiterate that the *social process of production* in general

> is as much a production process of material conditions of human life as a process taking place under specific historical and economic production relations, producing and reproducing these production relations themselves, and thereby also the bearers of this process, their material conditions of existence and their mutual relations, i.e., their particular socio-economic form.

Society, when viewed "from the standpoint of its economic structure," is thus "the aggregate of these relations, in which the agents of this production stand with respect to Nature and to one another, and in which they produce." For this reason, "production proceeds under definite material conditions which are . . . simultaneously the bearers of definite social relations entered into by individuals in the process of reproducing their life."[83] The statement that "the agents of . . . production stand with respect to Nature and to one another, and in which they [not only] produce" products out of nature, but also reproduce their social relations to one another, also establishes a necessary relationship between human activity and nature.[84] Apart from social interactions, objective nature is also necessary for the constitution of the social whole, for, as Marx philosophically states, "activity without an object is nothing."[85]

These thoughts are succinctly formulated by Marx as follows: "The direct relationship of labour to its products is the relationship of the worker to the objects of his production." This direct active relationship in capitalism begets another relationship: The relationship of the capitalist ("man of means") "to the objects of production and to production itself is only a *consequence* of this first relationship—and confirms it."[86] In capitalist production, this activity of objectification results in alienation of the producers from the product and therefore from other humans. In other words, "The medium through which estrangement takes place is itself *practical.* Thus through estranged labour man . . . creates his relationship to the object . . . " With the same activity, "he also creates the relationship in which other men stand to his production," to his activity, "and to his product, and the relationship in which he stands to these other men."[87]

3.8 Conclusion

The activity of production is the dominant moment in the formation of all societies. The character of this activity explains the general character of the structure of a particular society. This explanation is based on dialectical determinations, as explained earlier in this chapter.

However, this chapter ends on a note that makes a direct connection between Marx's explanation of the structure of society and the theory of

alienation. Since productive activity becomes alienated activity in bourgeois society, the structure of bourgeois society bears the characteristics of various forms of alienation emanating from alienated activity. This is to say that the dialectical processes in which different parts of the whole determine each other in *capitalist* society are precisely the processes of alienation. If so, a more adequate explanation of the dialectical relationship between activity and relations, forces and products of production, that is, the totality of the structure in capitalism, requires accounting for the processes of alienation. We will complete this thought in the next chapter, thus giving Marx's theory of the structure in bourgeois society a more detailed exposition.

CHAPTER 4

PROCESSES OF ALIENATION AND THE STRUCTURE OF BOURGEOIS SOCIETY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Marx's general theory of structure (base) includes two main determinants: human beings and nature. In this theory, as Rader succinctly puts it, "human interchange with nature is a permanent part of the base."[1] Marx alternately calls this interchange in which humans become nature and vice versa[2] objective activity, production, work, and labor. Through their labor, Marx says, "... men make cloth, linen, or silk materials in definite relations of production. But ... these definite social relations are just as much produced by men as linen, flax, etc. Social relations are closely bound up with productive forces."[3] In other words, the structure of a society encompasses productive activity, social relations, products, and forces of production, which are all "closely bound up" and dialectically related. These are the main parts of the more abstractly general relationship between humans and nature. Furthermore, the interaction of humans with nature is a process of reproduction that constitutes a circular totality. This has already been established in the previous chapter.

Capitalist society is also one such totality. However, it is a particular form of this totality in which the parts of the whole acquire historically specific character. In Marx's own words, the capitalist process of production, seen as a totality or as a connected process of reproduction, "produces not only commodities, not only surplus-value, but it also produces and reproduces the capitalist relation; on the one side the capitalist,

on the other the wage labourer."[4] All of these moments, along with the instruments of production as capital, constitute the main parts of the *capitalist* structure, which is perceived as a process.

The capitalistic process of reproduction engenders isolated, independent individuals who nevertheless must depend on one another. This "personal independence," of the isolated individuals, says Marx, is "based upon dependence *mediated by things* . . . "[5] In other words, the social relations of the isolated individuals are mediated by commodities and capital in and through production, exchange and circulation processes. The mediation process in which the structure of capitalist society is formed, according to the Marxian theory, cannot be properly understood without his theory of alienation.[6] The whole process of reproduction and mediation is but a totality of various distinctive, but interrelated, processes of alienation of humans from their activity, products, and other humans. These forms of alienation culminate into the alienation of humans from their species being, that is, from their essential nature. They represent the totality of human dehumanization. If so, the explanation of the structure of bourgeois society is the same as its criticism.

4.2 ALIENATION OF ACTIVITY

Marx's theory of alienation has been thoroughly studied before.[7] According to Ollman, "Marx presents alienation as a partaking of four broad relations which [are] . . . man's relations to his productive activity, his product, other men and the species."[8] But

> As with other relations in Marx's work, the four listed here are aspects of an organic whole. Hence, an explanation of alienation could begin with any one and go naturally on to others. Marx himself begins with man's alienation in his product, but . . . alienated activity offers a better starting point.

Even though he suggests that alienated activity is "a better starting point," Ollman's reconstruction of Marx's dialectical thought seems to oppose the prioritization of any moment of the social whole. Moreover, Ollman's refusal to use the term "structure" only obscures the relationship between Marx's historical-materialist account of the structure of bourgeois society and the theory of alienation.[9] In these respects, my account of Marx's theory of alienation departs from that of Ollman.

The logic I employ here is that if these four broad relations of alienation are the fundamental relations of the bourgeois organic whole, then they must also be the fundamental constitutive moments of the structure

of this whole. In explaining why this must be so, I will start with alienated activity with the reminder that activity is the logical first premise of the dialectically constituted organic whole (Chapter 3).

4.2.1 Alienation of Activity as Human Suffering

Understanding the processes of alienation requires a standpoint that captures what is being alienated. It is the concept of human nature in general that provides this standpoint. Without it, neither Marx's theory of alienation nor his theory of bourgeois society would make much sense.

Marx says in *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844* that

> *Man* is directly a *natural being.* As a natural being and as a living natural being he is on the one hand endowed with *natural powers, vital powers*—he is an *active* natural being. These forces exist in him as tendencies and abilities—as *instincts.* On the other hand, as a natural, corporeal, sensuous objective being he is a *suffering,* conditioned and limited creature, like animals and plants. That is to say, the *objects* of his instincts exist outside him, as *objects* independent of him; yet these objects are *objects* that he *needs*—essential *objects,* indispensable to the manifestation and confirmation of his essential powers . . .
>
> Man as an objective, sensuous being is therefore a *suffering* being—and because he feels that he suffers, a *passionate* being.[10]

The concept of *suffering*[11] provides us with a crucial vantage point in Marx's theory of human nature and its alienation, especially the alienation of activity. Humans are essentially "conditioned and limited" creatures, which makes them suffering beings. The concept of suffering, in the first instance, explains why there is a nature-imposed need for objective activity, that is, a need for humans to interchange with nature. The self-realization of the subject occurs in and through this activity.

But *human* activity must assume a form that is consistent with human essence. This means that it must be a free and comprehensive (all-round) activity. The comprehensiveness of the activity stems from the fact that human essence has varied "determinations:"

> Man appropriates his comprehensive essence in a comprehensive manner, that is to say, as a whole man. Each of his *human* relations to the world . . . , in short, all the organs of his individual being, . . . are directly social in their form, are in their *objective* orientation, or in their *orientation to the object,* the appropriation of the object, the appropriation of *human* reality. Their orientation to the object is the *manifestation of the human reality,* it is human *activity* and human *suffering* . . .

Therefore, human social reality "is just as highly varied as the *determinations* of human *essence* and *activities.*" The need for comprehensive self-realization, the externalization of "varied determinations" of human essence, further informs the concept of suffering, "for suffering, humanly considered, is a kind of self-enjoyment of man."[12] In other words, self-realization, "humanly considered," is a form of suffering in two senses of the word: feeling of inadequacy (being needy and thus conditioned) and "enjoyment," that is, satisfaction, obtained in and through the activity of objectification in an all-sided, "comprehensive" way.

According to Marx, freedom cannot be reduced to "tranquility," idleness, or absence of obstacles. It always comes about in and through objective activity, that is, through the interaction of humans with nature. This is a fundamentally different notion of freedom than the one proposed by classical liberals, including Adam Smith. As Marx puts it,

> . . . A. Smith has no inkling that the overcoming of . . . obstacles is in itself a manifestation of freedom—and, moreover, that the external aims are (thereby) stripped of their character as merely external natural necessity, and become posited as aims which only the individual himself posits, that they are therefore posited as self-realisation, objectification of the subject, and thus real freedom, whose action is, precisely work.

Free activity, however demanding it may be, is a source of suffering as enjoyment and involves the "overcoming of obstacles." But such an activity can achieve this character in production only if "(1) its social character is posited; (2) if it is . . . general in its application."[13]

From the opposite angle, such an activity cannot be "the exertion of the worker as a natural force drilled in a particular way, but as a subject, which appears in the production process not in a merely natural, spontaneous form, but as an activity controlling all natural forces." Here, Marx is making a distinction between the natural, spontaneous form of free activity and the form it would take in developed communism, a condition in which the subject of activity would consciously control the natural forces. Forced activity, *drilled in a particular way,* is not a form of free activity. Thus, Smith is right that in all hitherto historical forms of slave, serf, and wage labor, "work is always repulsive and always appears as *externally imposed, forced labour.*"[14] As Marx puts it elsewhere, in such circumstances of alienation, "*activity* is . . . *hateful* . . . , a *torment,* and rather the *semblance* of an activity."[15]

According to Marx, the *external character,* the alienated character, of labor for the worker consists in the fact that activity "is not his own, but someone else's, that it does not belong to him, that in it he belongs,

not to himself, but to another."[16] This expresses the other side of the same thought as the one discussed earlier where Marx says the external character of an activity can be avoided if it is self-posited. Since the worker's powers and activity belong to another (to the capitalist), "alien activity . . . is activity as suffering, strength as weakness, begetting as emasculating . . . " The all-important significance of activity to human essence becomes clear when Marx rhetorically asks, "what is life but activity?"[17] We will see later in text that it is through the commodification of their labor power that workers lose their activity, and therefore their essential functions, to "someone else" in their social relations of production.

Suffering in general is, then, a natural human condition of self-externalization and satisfaction. In bourgeois form of production, suffering *also* becomes torment. This is because activity is neither comprehensive nor free, and for these reasons, it is a *semblance* of an activity, and therefore also a *semblance* of human life. It is not free partly because it is not comprehensive, and vice versa. It is neither, as we shall further see later in this chapter, because activity in capitalist production is not only drilled, but also fragmented and one-sided, so that it can be more effectively drilled. We will also see later that this form of activity explains the character of products (as commodities) and commodity fetishism, as well as the character of the social relations between individuals and classes. In other words, alienated activity is the first premise of the structure of bourgeois society.

At the same time, we must not lose sight of the fact that alienated activity for Marx is not *merely* an act of externalization and self-realization in and through nature, as it is for Hegel.[18] As Marx so vividly explains,

> First, the fact that labour is external to the worker, i.e., it does not belong to his intrinsic nature; that in his work, therefore, he does not affirm himself but denies himself, does not feel content but unhappy, does not develop freely his physical and mental energy but mortifies his body and ruins his mind. The worker therefore only feels himself outside his work, and in his work feels outside himself . . . His labour is therefore not voluntary, but coerced; it is *forced labour.* It is therefore not the satisfaction of a need; it is merely a means to satisfy needs external to it . . . External labour, labour in which man alienates himself, is a labour of self-sacrifice, of mortification.[19]

According to Marx, because Hegel does not adequately see these negative manifestations of essence, he fails to adopt a truly critical standpoint.[20] The fact that alienated activity results in "self-sacrifice" and "mortification," in suffering as torment, shows to Marx that human essence and existence have not been reconciled in bourgeois society and that this society fails to satisfy the most essential human need: freedom.

4.2.2 COMMODIFICATION OF HUMAN POWERS AS ALIENATION OF LABOR

In capitalism, alienation of activity coincides with the commodification of labor power. A more adequate understanding of alienated activity in this system, then, requires us to explain how humans themselves become a commodity in and through their productive activity and relations.

In order to get to the bottom of this, Marx distinguishes between labor power and labor in his later works. The labor power of the worker becomes a commodity. The labor power of an individual "can appear" as a regular commodity. In reality, labor power is "the aggregate of those mental and physical capabilities existing in the physical form, the living personality, of a human being, capabilities existing in a human being, which he exercises whenever he produces a use value of any description."[21] What Marx calls *labor* is the exercise, the externalization, the "expenditure" of these powers.

It follows that assigning exchange value to human powers, as *The Communist Manifesto* states, is the same as resolving "personal worth into exchange value."[22] But the main purpose of buying the labor power of an individual is to convert him or her into a special form of force of production, which not only produces commodities, but also continuously reproduces itself as a value-adding commodity. This process degrades humans into things. Thus, "the bourgeois sees in the proletarian not a *human being,* but a *force* capable of creating wealth, a force which can then compare with other productive forces—an animal, a machine . . . "[23] As Marx puts it elsewhere, this process constitutes a form of dehumanization:

> Production does not simply produce man as a *commodity,* the *human commodity,* man in the role of *commodity*; it produces him in keeping with this role as a *mentally* and physically dehumanised being.—Immorality, deformity, and dulling of the workers and the capitalists.—Its product is *the self-conscious and self-acting commodity* . . . the *human* commodity . . . [24]

This process of dehumanization requires the worker to be "free in the double sense, that as a free man he can dispose of his labour power as his own commodity, and that on the other hand he has no other commodity for sale, is short of everything necessary for the realisation of his labour power."[25] Workers must *constantly* offer themselves for sale in the market as "free" agents *in order to survive.* For this reason, Marx thinks this form of "free" labor is actually forced labor. Consequently,

> It is no longer a mere accident, that capitalist and labourer confront each other in the market as buyer and seller. It is the process itself that incessantly hurls back the labourer onto the market as a vendor of his labour

> power, and that incessantly converts his own product into a means by which another man can purchase him. In reality, the labourer belongs to capital before he has sold himself to capital. His economic bondage is both brought about and concealed by the periodic sale of himself, by his change of masters, and by the oscillations in the market price of labour power.[26]

The "economic bondage" resulting in and from the commodification of labor power produces, and reproduces, as *Capital* again states, the "undisputed authority of the capitalist over men, (who) are but parts of a mechanism that belongs to him."[27] This bondage constitutes a structural relationship of authority in which humans own and control other humans, however partially (more on this later in text).

In short, the commodification of human powers is not only a form of dehumanization but also the basis of the structural relations of bourgeois society in which the capitalist dominates the worker, however much this relationship may appear to result from the workers freely selling themselves. In this process, the products of alienated labor—commodities—become "a means by which another man can purchase him" as a special commodity.[28] Thus, (a) the alienated social relations of individuals are mediated through commodities and (b) products are alienated from the workers in a way that products come to confront them as hostile forces. We now turn our attention to these two aspects of alienation.

4.3 Alienation in and from the Products of Labor

Alienated activity becomes activity of alienation in a second sense. Marx calls this "the alienation of the worker in his product," which also results in the alienation of the worker *from* his or her product, a condition in which "the worker is related to *the product of his labour* as to an *alien object.*" This means that the worker's products appear to "exists *outside him,* independently, as something alien to him . . . ," as "a power on its own confronting him . . . as something hostile and alien,"[29] whereas, in reality, they are the products of the worker's labor.

The question Marx is seeking to answer in this context is one that occupied him throughout his career. As he asks again in *The German Ideology,* "Individuals always . . . proceed from themselves. Their relations are the relations of their real life-process. How does it happen that their relations assume an independent existence over against them? and that the forces of their own life become superior to them?"[30] Marx's answer in his later major writings involves following the production and circulation of commodities and their consumption into capital. The next two sections briefly follow this movement.

4.3.1 ALIENATION IN AND FROM THE PRODUCT AS COMMODITY

All products of labor have value. Products of labor in capitalism are commodities. As products, commodities also have value. In order to understand the special character of commodities as distinct from products of labor in general, we must understand their specific value form, as distinct from the value of products in general. As Marx himself clarifies, "The reader must note that we are not speaking here of the wages or value that the labourer gets for a given labour time, *but of the value of the commodity in which that labour time is materialized.*"[31] We are, then, discussing the essence of the commodities and their value. With Marx, we are here looking for the "*differentia specifica* of the value form, and consequently of the commodity form," which acquires its specificity, that is, its "special historical character," in and through "bourgeois production . . . which stamps that production" and therefore also the product "with a particular social species of production."[32]

Before we can understand what differentiates commodities from products in general, we must understand what they share in common. All products, including commodities, have use value, because they internally embody objectified labor power, the expenditure of which is always social:

> the "use-value," amounts to a mere *concretisation* of human labour, as the *expenditure of equal human labour-power,* and therefore this content is presented as the *concrete* character of the *thing,* as a character appertaining essentially to *the thing itself,* although this objectivity does *not* appear in its natural form //which, however, necessitates a special *form of value*// . . . (T)he "value" of the commodity merely expresses in a historically developed form something which also exists in all other historical forms of society, albeit *in a different form, namely the social character of labour,* insofar as it exists as *expenditure of "social" labour-power.* If, then, "the value" of the commodity is merely a particular historical form of something which exists in all forms of society, the same must be true of the "social use-value," as it characterises the "use-value" of the commodity.[33]

Before examining the special form of value that also contains use value, we must note that "A thing can be a use value, without having value. This is the case whenever its utility to man is not due to labour. Such are air, virgin soil, natural meadows, &c." Then, use value is based on the utility of a thing to human beings, insofar as it satisfies some kind of want or need. The reason why a thing can have use value without having value is that in such a scenario the thing lacks labor input. For this reason, value *as such* is possible only with the expenditure of labor power. *A thing has value only if it is objectified labor power, and if a thing is objectified labor*

power, it always has not only value but also use value. Since labor is always social, products of labor always have *social* use value. This is the general character of the products of labor in all societies: their essence is social labor.[34] This holds true for commodities, too.

But the "value" of a commodity is "a complex of two things—use value and exchange value." The twofold character of the value of commodity stems from the fact that "labour too possesses the same twofold nature; for, so far as it finds expression in value, it does not possess the same characteristics that belong to it as the creator of use values." It follows that labor that goes into commodities has a "twofold nature," one of which is responsible for its exchange value and the other for its use value. Of the latter, Marx says that a thing, such as a "coat," has use value if it "satisfies a particular want." This results from "a special sort of productive activity, the nature of which is determined by its aim, mode of operation, subject, means, and result." Marx calls this form of productive activity "useful labor."[35] Since there are many varieties of useful things and thus "values in use," there are also varieties of useful labor.

The presence of many varieties of useful things necessitates social production as social division of labor, thus making use value social use value. All societies have a form of division of labor, and thus social relations of production, insofar as they produce a variety of useful things that they exchange for things of different use value. This means that commodity production itself rests on a form of division of labor (social production), though commodity production itself is not a "necessary condition for the division of labour."[36] Without acknowledging this fact, one might fall into the illusion that all societies with division of labor produce commodities.

Commodity production, according to Marx, requires a particular form of division of labor ("*expenditure of 'social' labour-power,*" as noted earlier in text) and hence a different kind of social structure, a kind that includes the second type of labor: "Only such products can become commodities with regard to each other, as result from [qualitatively] different kinds of labor," and hence division of labor, if each kind of labor is "carried on independently and for the account of private individuals,"[37] and if it counts as "human labour in the abstract, the expenditure of human labour in general."[38] Hence, the expenditure of social labor power in commodity production takes the form of the expenditure of the labor power of isolated individuals and human labor in the abstract.

This notion of abstract labor as the basis of value is widely known as the average labor time deduced from the overall labor output of society. However, abstract labor has another important meaning. It is a one-sided activity of the individual, which, through capitalistic division of labor,

has attained its most one-sided form in "simple unskilled labour." This is evident in Marx's insistence that even skilled, concrete labor is represented in the value of commodities as a reduction to unskilled labor as the common denominator of all social labor. The value of a commodity "represents a definite quantity" of the "simple unskilled labour . . . alone." Thus, the abstract labor in general is actually the dialectical unity of simple, one-sided labor, which is a representation of different types of labor as equalized, average, and homogenized quantifications.[39]

This consideration leads to the conclusion that the more universal is the abstract general social labor, the more fragmented, reified becomes the abstract (one-sided) particular labor of the individual. In other words, the larger is the scope of social division of labor, the more the labor of an individual is fragmented. This makes possible the quantification of the particular abstract labor into the general abstract labor. That is to say,

> The quantity of labor . . . is measured by its duration, and labour time in its turn finds its standard in weeks, days, and hours . . .
>
> The total labour power of society, which is embodied in the sum total of the values of all commodities produced by that society, counts here as one homogeneous mass of human labor-power, composed though it be of innumerable individual units. Each of these units is the same as any other, so far as it has the character of the average labour power of society, and takes effect as such; that is, so far as it requires for producing a commodity, no more time than is needed on an average, no more than is socially necessary.[40]

This form of labor makes possible the universalization of the exchange value of commodities. Without it, money as the universal commodity is also not possible.

We note that the kind of labor that goes into commodities is the reification of the otherwise naturally all-sided, comprehensive, social labor power into simple tasks. This means the all-sided, comprehensive labor in bourgeois society is a dialectical composite of the alienated, fragmented, one-sided labor that can be expressed comprehensively as the general social output, made possible by the generalized division of labor in society. It is not the all-sided activity of individuals, which is necessary for their more concrete existence, development, and freedom. Nor is it the free activity whose social character is explicitly posited. Rather, social labor appears as the sum total of expended labor power of the isolated, atomized, fragmented individuals who are (or think they are) working on their own account.

This results in commodity fetishism. Fetishism, as Marx understands it, refers to any condition in which "the productions of the human

brain . . . and the products of men's hands . . . appear as independent beings . . . entering into relation both with one another and the human race."[41] In all cases of fetishism, (a) there occurs a form of domination of humans by their own products (mental and material) and (b) the real relations of humans with each other are obscured by the fact that they appear as indirect relations through a medium of their own making. Religion, god, the state, commodities, and capital are but various forms of such fetishistic "independent beings," serving as various forms of mediation. All instances of fetishism are, thus, instances of alienation not only of a human being from other humans but also of humans from their products. For this reason,

> A commodity is . . . a mysterious thing, simply because in it the social character of men's labour appears to them as an objective character stamped upon the product of that labour; because the relation of the producers to the sum total of their own labour is presented to them as a social relation, existing not between themselves, but between the products of their labour . . .

In reality, commodity

> is a definite social relation between men that assumes, in their eyes, the fantastic form of a relation between things This I call the Fetishism which attaches itself to the products of labour, so soon as they are produced as commodities, and which is therefore inseparable from the production of commodities.

This fetishism attached to commodities "has its origin . . . in the peculiar social character of the labour that produces them."[42] The essential origin of commodity fetishism, then, is alienated labor and the peculiar social character it assumes.

We have observed earlier in text that commodity assumes abstract, fragmented labor of isolated individuals working on their own account, who themselves have been commodified. It is the general process in which labor becomes alienated in a manner that imposes on us the mental abstraction (inversion) characteristic of fetishism. Such a mental abstraction is based on a one-sided aspect of labor, on abstract labor. It is the miniscule vantage point of isolated, fragmented labor's relationship to the products of otherwise social labor. For this reason, Marx insists that we look at labor also from the vantage point of a more general abstraction in which labor's more concrete manifestation can be accounted for. The fragmented labor of the isolated individual is, in fact, an aspect of the more concrete labor of the working class, nay the society, as a whole.

This perspective reveals to Marx that the true, but not yet conscious, agent behind the product is the working class, whose individualized labor power appears to be isolated from the social whole in which it functions.

From another related angle, fetishism occurs because the production relation of individuals is concealed, or "does not show itself," as a direct social relation. As Marx explains,

> Since the producers do not come into social contact with each other until they exchange their products, the specific social character of each producer's labour does not show itself except in the act of exchange. In other words, the labour of the individual asserts itself as a part of the labour of society, only by means of the relations which the act of exchange establishes directly between the products, and indirectly, through them, between the producers. To the latter, therefore, the relations connecting the labour of one individual with that of the rest appear, not as direct social relations between individuals at work, but as what they really are, material relations between persons and social relations between things.[43]

This gives the social relations of individuals the one-sided appearance of material relations between "persons" and "social relations between things." This constitutes a form of social alienation, which would not have been possible without the conversion of labor activity into exchange values, stemming from the commodification of labor power, and consequently without the "dissolution" of all products into exchange values.

To sum it all up,

> The dissolution of all products and activities into exchange values presupposes both the dissolution of all established personal (historical) relations of dependence in production, and the all-round dependence of the producers upon one another. The production of each individual is dependent upon the production of all the others; as also the transformation of his product into means of subsistence for himself has become dependent upon the consumption of all the others.

Thus, the predominance of exchange value presupposes the historical "dissolution" of community (alienation of a human being from other humans) into "the society of free competition." [44]

In such a society, the "reciprocal dependence" of isolated individuals

> . . . is expressed in the constant need for exchange and in exchange value as the universal mediator . . . The absolute dependence of individuals, who are indifferent to one another, constitutes their social connection. This social connection is expressed in *exchange value,* in which alone is his own activity

> or his product becomes an activity or product for the individual himself. He must produce a general product—*exchange value,* or exchange value isolated by itself, individualised: *money.* On the other hand, the power that each individual exercises over the activity of others or over social wealth exists in him as the owner of *exchange values,* of *money*. He carries his social power, as well as his connection with society, in his pocket.
>
> The activity, whatever its individual form of manifestation, and the product of the activity, whatever its particular nature, is *exchange value,* i.e., something general in which all individuality and all particularity is negated and extinguished.[45]

This is nothing but a condition of alienation and the basis of fetishism:

> The social character of the activity, as also the social form of the product, and the share of the individual in production, appear here as something alien and existing outside the individuals; not as their relationship to each other, but as their subordination to relationships existing independently of them and arising out of the collision between indifferent individuals. The general exchange of activities and products, which has become the condition of life for every single individual, their mutual connection, appears to the individuals themselves alien, independent, as a thing. In exchange value, the social relationship of persons is transformed into a social attitude of things; personal capacity into a capacity of things.

It follows that the form of the structure of society is dialectically related to the form assumed by the activity of labor and the products of labor. As much as alienated labor gives you commodities, commodities give you the society of alienated, isolated individuals. The universal dissolution of labor into exchange value is the basis of the process in which the community is dissolved into isolated individuals. The opposite of this rule also holds true: "The less social power the means of exchange possesses, the more closely it is still connected with the nature of the immediate product of labour and the immediate needs of the exchangers, the greater must that power of the community still be which binds together the individuals . . ."[46]

4.3.2 Alienation in and from Product as Capital

The fact that commodities have exchange value means that they are produced for the purpose of exchange. In other words, "A thing can be useful, and the product of human labour, without being a commodity. Whoever directly satisfies his wants with the produce of his own labour, creates, indeed, use values, but not commodities." In addition to the abstract

labor of the isolated individual, "To become a commodity a product must be transferred to another, whom it will serve as a use value, by means of an exchange."[47] In other words, the product must be alienated to the capitalist, who will exchange it in order to obtain use value out of it.

Alienation from the product in its commodity form, thus, does not strictly consist in the fact that it is produced as a use value for someone else other than the producer. What makes the separation from the product alienating is that it is produced as a commodity, as a product alienated to another person, *who will obtain use value from it by exchanging it*. Exchange value, then, is an intermediary medium through which the use value of the product is obtained by the capitalist: "exchange value posits and mediates use value, namely, as use value for others, etc."[48] The ultimate purpose of obtaining use value in a capitalist society is capital accumulation. By means of an exchange, commodity production must ultimately succumb to the process of capital accumulation.[49] The use value of commodities, then, is determined by their contribution to capital accumulation.

Here, two interrelated processes of alienation are at work. First, use value is transformed into something alien. It is no longer directly related to the satisfaction of human needs, which is the general, natural purpose of creating use value (more on this later). Second, the consumption of the use value of a product metamorphoses the product into a hostile force, that is, into capital. This conversion of commodities into hostile forces of production needs to be further explained, albeit briefly.

The value of commodity, as we have discussed earlier in text, is twofold: use value and exchange value. As a general rule, a product must have use value in order to also have exchange value. But a product embodying use value and exchange value is only *potentially* a commodity. Its exchange value is realized through its transfer, through its exchange.

This is a necessary intermediary step, but not sufficient. The exchange of commodities does not fully complete the process of actualization of their entire value. In other words, the realization of its use value must also occur. This occurs at the point of its consumption,[50] when the product satisfies some kind of a need. Otherwise, "without being an object of utility . . . the thing is useless, so is the labour contained in it; the labour does not count as labour, and therefore creates no value."[51] At this point, since it is primarily consumed into capital[52] (constant and variable), the product becomes the basis of production once again. Here, consumption becomes a process of production and production a process of consumption. In this manner, the product resupplies the accumulation of constant capital and the maintenance of variable capital, that is, labor power. The

utility, the use value, of the product and the useful labor that goes into it are ultimately defined by the process of capital accumulation.

What goes into constant capital is not simply value but surplus value, which is the difference left in the value created by labor after the consumption of the value necessary, on the average, to maintain labor power. Said differently, surplus value is the difference between two forms of commodity: living and dead labor, that is, labor power as commodity and objectified alien labor as commodity. The exchange and consumption of other commodities with each other merely help valorize exchange value without accumulation. The non-equivalent exchange of living labor for dead labor (exploitation) is the reason why there is capital accumulation.

In other words, alienated living labor is the only commodity that can add value, and whose exchange for its own products, and consequently its consumption into capital, can leave a surplus necessary for accumulation. This difference makes capital accumulated labor, or "dead labour, that, vampire-like," which "only lives by sucking living labour, and lives the more, the more labour it sucks."[53] This also makes the vampire depend on the maintenance and reproduction of living labor, without which capital and capitalism would cease to exist. As we shall see later, capital accumulation creates a tendency to suck more and more life out of living labor.

At the point of its consumption, a portion of the product returns to the worker initially in the form of exchange value. This stems from the fact that, as Marx says elsewhere, "as use value, labour belongs to the capitalist; as merely exchange value, it belongs to the worker."[54] Thus, the worker exchanges the exchange value portion of his or her labor, and the capitalist keeps the use value without exchange. The fact that the worker receives money in this exchange does not change, but obscures, the fact that his or her payment is ultimately a portion of his or her own objectified labor consumed as use value. In this act, without considering all else, equivalent values are exchanged for equivalent values.[55] Even then, "what flows back to the labourer in the shape of wages is a portion of the product that is continuously reproduced by him. The capitalist, it is true, pays him in money, but this money is merely the transmuted form of the product of his labour." Another portion goes to fund "the private consumption of the capitalist."[56] It follows that, as we shall further discuss in the next chapter, there is no real exchange between the worker and the capitalist.

But workers receive this exchange value in order to maintain their labor power so that they can continue producing more surplus value and contribute to the accumulation of capital. In order to do so, they must consume commodities to satisfy their needs. Here, "The fact that the labourer consumes his means of subsistence for his own purposes,

and not to please the capitalist, has no bearing on the matter." Through returning a portion of the products to the worker, the capitalist "kills two birds with one stone." The capitalist "profits not only by what he receives from," in the form of surplus value, but also by "what he gives to the labourer." The latter benefit to the capitalist results from the fact that the wages exchanged for labor power are "converted into necessaries, by the consumption of which the muscles, nerves, bones, and brains of existing labourers are reproduced, and new labourers are begotten." The maintenance, production, and reproduction of the laborer as a force of production, as capital, are "indispensable to the capitalist." But for reasons discussed later, this must occur "within the limits of what is strictly necessary" to permit capital accumulation,[57] and in such a way that the worker works as a living instrument or becomes capital.

Hence, when a commodity is consumed by the worker, it becomes converted into an aspect of the instrument of production (capital) in the person of the worker; the worker becomes reproduced as a product of his or her own alien labor. In this process, exchanging exchange values provides a medium through which use value created by labor is distributed into various branches of capital. In short, the variable capital as money that funds capital as labor power is

> only a particular historical form of appearance of the fund for providing the necessaries of life, or the labour-fund which the labourer requires for the maintenance of himself and family, and which, whatever be the system of social production, he must himself produce and reproduce. If the labour-fund constantly flows to him in the form of money that pays for his labour, it is because the product he has created moves constantly away from him in the form of capital. But all this does not alter the fact that it is the labourer's own labour, realised in a product, which is advanced to him by the capitalist.[58]

In this process, "living labour itself appears as *alien vis-à-vis* living labour capacity, whose labour it is, whose life it expresses, for it is surrendered to capital in return for objectified labour, for the product of labour itself." Thus, labor capacity (labor power) "relates to it as to something alien."[59] This constitutes not only alienation of humans (workers) from other humans (capitalist), and from their product, but also alienation of humans from themselves, which, due to the peculiar nature of these alienated relations, gives capital a fetishistic form. As Marx sums up,

> Since living labour is incorporated into capital—through the exchange between capital and the worker—since it appears as an activity belonging to capital, as soon as the labour process starts, all the productive powers

> of social labour present themselves as productive powers of capital, just as the general social form of labour appears in money as the quality of a thing. Thus the productive power of social labour, and the specific forms of it, now present themselves as productive powers and forms of capital, of *objectified* labour, of the objective conditions of labour, which—as such an independent entity—are personified in the capitalist and confront living labour. Here once again we have the inversion of the relation, the expression of which we have already characterised as *fetishism* . . . [60]

The alienation of the product from the worker is obtained through the metamorphosis of the living labor into capital. This alienation as separation from the product, due to fetishism, gives the *impression* that capital is an independent force from which the productive power of social labor and its specific aims and forms emanate.

This *illusion,* which inverts the reality, has some *real* consequences. One of them is that the capitalist, who personifies capital, also assumes an independent status and becomes the legal owner of the objective conditions of labor, with the right to control the productive powers of the subjective conditions of social labor. In this capacity, the capitalist confronts living labor as a hostile, dominant authority within the social relations of production. Since the capitalist is in reality a product of alienated labor, the confrontation of the worker by the capitalist amounts to the confrontation of the worker by his or her own product. Another real consequence of this fetishistic illusion is that objectified labor as capital, as instruments of production, also turns into an entity over and against the living labor. Let us pursue the last consequence first, and arrive at the other two later.

4.3.3 THE INSTRUMENTS OF PRODUCTION AS HOSTILE FORCES

The instruments of production as constant capital, as we have discussed, are the alienated products of commodified labor. Once produced, such instruments of production become a medium through which the processes of alienation are reproduced. From this vantage point, instruments of production become hostile forces over and against the worker. The machine form of constant capital epitomizes this hostility in its most brutal form. In order to understand why Marx thinks this constitutes a form of alienation, we must first compare the instruments of production in general with the form they take, as capital, in bourgeois society.

According to Marx, human beings naturally (in all societies) produce the means of their subsistence in the sense that they produce the products they need and in the sense that they produce the tools (means

of production) with which they produce these products. In *Capital*, he tellingly calls the latter, "the instruments of production for sustaining life," "the productive organs of man."[61] As such, they are natural extensions of humans, who themselves are, collectively, a force of production. Under non-alienated conditions, such organs, organic and inorganic, are their tools, employed under their direction for their own purposes as a social being. This is one aspect that, as we have discussed in the previous chapters, distinguishes human beings from animals, or informs what it means to be a human being in general.

In a capitalist structure driven by capital accumulation, these instruments remain the "productive organs of man," but the roles are inverted. As Marx explains,

> If we consider the process of production from the point of view of the simple labour-process, the labourer stands in relation to the means of production, not in their quality as capital, but as the mere means and material of his own intelligent productive activity. In tanning, *e.g.,* he deals with the skins as his simple objects of labour. It is not the capitalist whose skin he tans. But it is different as soon as we deal with the process of production from the point of view of the process of creation of surplus-value. The means of production are at once changed into means for the absorption of the labour of others. It is now no longer the labourer that employs the means of production, but the means of production that employ the labourer. Instead of being consumed by him as material elements of his productive activity, they consume him as the ferment necessary to their own life-process, and the life-process of capital consists only in its movement as value constantly expanding, constantly multiplying itself.

This process generates an "inversion of the relation between dead and living labour . . . "[62]

The life process of capital, its movement as constantly expanding value, makes the development of the instruments of production a revolutionary process. On the one hand, this development makes *possible* the emancipation of labor. In this sense, capital's development remains as the positive side of the forces of production. On the other, in its capitalistic form, as capital, it achieves the opposite because of the inverted relation between capital and living labor. Marx, in *Capital,* draws our attention to this "paradox," which the great thinkers of the past could not have imagined:

> Hence that remarkable phenomenon in the history of modern industry, that machinery sweeps away every moral and natural restriction on the length of the working-day. Hence, too, the economic paradox, that the

> most powerful instrument for shortening labour-time, becomes the most unfailing means for placing every moment of the labourer's time and that of his family, at the disposal of the capitalist for the purpose of expanding the value of his capital . . . (M)achinery is the surest means of lengthening the working-day.[63]

Furthermore, the development of machinery makes possible more efficient social control over the time period in which the living labor is consumed.[64] After all, this is *a* significant reason as to why instruments of production develop. At the same time, instead of giving the worker more security in maintaining his or her life, the "absolute contradiction between the technical necessities of modern industry, and the social character inherent in its capitalistic form dispels all fixity and security in the situation of the labourer" by "taking away the instruments of labour, to snatch from his hands his means of subsistence, and by suppressing his detail-function to make him superfluous."[65] This exemplifies what Marx means when he says there is a fundamental contradiction between the development of the forces of production and social relations.

By making many workers superfluous, machine as capital also makes possible the "creation of that monstrosity, an industrial reserve army, kept in misery in order to be always at the disposal of capital." Hence, the machine as capital contributes to the formation of bourgeois society as one in which a significant portion of the whole society is disposable. This disposability feeds back into the condition of dependence, which in turn leads to "incessant human sacrifices among the working class, in the most reckless squandering of labour power . . . ,"[66] in the exploitation of ever cheapening labor power.[67] Thus, the instruments of production, products of alienated labor, turn against the workers as a hostile force by making them increasingly devalued and unnecessary and by depriving them of their life and livelihood. Of the latter,

> You take my life,
>
> When you do take the means whereby I live.[68]

The machinery as capital exists in a dialectical relationship with the capitalistic division of labor and the social relations emanating from it. It develops as a result of this division and reinforces the division of labor further. From the perspective of alienation, this form of capital helps organize social production in a hierarchical way, an organization in which the workers " . . . are placed under the command of a perfect hierarchy of officers and sergeants," who manage them as parts of machines. Thus, "Not

only are they slaves of the bourgeois class, and of the bourgeois State; they are daily and hourly enslaved by the machine, by the overlooker, and, above all, by the individual bourgeois manufacturer himself."[69] The intervention of machinery in this regard requires that the workers are trained, drilled, to act "as a machine."[70] Marx, in *Capital,* states that the division of labor turns the worker into a "living appendage of machine."[71] The machine in its capitalistic form, then, is not simply a force of production. It is also a necessary instrument and a main determinant in the formation of the structure of bourgeois society and of the specific form of domination its social organization produces.

In this process, the activity of the worker must itself be broken into specific tasks, which brings about the diminution of his or her activity to simple, monotonous, homogenous movements. Such fragmentation of humans, made possible with the introduction of the machine as capital, also contributes to the technological advancement of the machines themselves. The fragmentation of activity comes with human costs. Marx observes that "the subjection of the producer to one brunch exclusively, the breaking up of the multifariousness of his employment"[72] is turning him into a "crippled . . . mere fragment of a man."[73] Through this fragmentation, workers lose their "individuality."[74]

In short,

> Owing to the extensive use of machinery and to division of labour, the work of the proletarians has lost all individual character, and consequently, all charm for the workman. He becomes an appendage of the machine, and it is only the most simple, most monotonous, and most easily knack, that is required of him.[75]

This is because a fragmented, one-sided activity is only a fragment of a person whose individuality must develop through all-round activity. These comments from *The Communist Manifesto* and *Capital* neatly dovetail what Marx had already outlined in *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*: "the machine accommodates itself to the *weakness* of the human being in order to make the *weak* human being into a machine."[76] What is lacking here is that the forces of production are not the "free manifestations" of the lives of the individuals, as *The German Ideology* also repeats.[77] Instead, they are instruments of their alienation, exploitation, and domination. If they contribute to the fragmentation and isolation of labor and the laborer, then, since these are the basis of exchange value, the instruments of production are also instrumental in making the commodities and commodity fetishism possible.

All in all, the instruments of production, as capital, are not merely forces enabling production. They are also social relations of domination, alienation, and dehumanization. Without them, the structure of bourgeois society as social relations of individuals and classes is not possible for they play an essential role in the structuration of this society and its products into patterned social relations.

4.4 Social Alienation and the Structure of Society

Marx says, in *The Holy Family,* that the proletariat is the "most suffering" class, because its experience sums up all forms of alienation in capitalism. In this context, he makes an important distinction between the workers and the capitalists:

> The propertied class and the class of proletariat present the same human self-estrangement. But the former feels at ease and strengthened in this self-estrangement, it recognises estrangement *as its own power* and has in it the *semblance* of a human existence. The latter, feels annihilated in estrangement; it sees in it its own powerlessness and the reality of an inhuman existence.[78]

This thought highlights the internally related co-alienation of the individuals constituting the two main classes in bourgeois society. Because the labor power of the worker belongs to the "propertied class," the latter experiences "human existence." But it is a "semblance of a human existence" since it is an internal relation of the worker's enslavement and inhuman existence. This constitutes a form of social alienation.

How this social alienation comes about is a complex matter. To reiterate what has already been discussed earlier, the capitalist process of production, seen as a totality or as a connected process of reproduction, "produces not only commodities, not only surplus-value, but it also produces and reproduces the capitalist relation; on the one side the capitalist, on the other the wage labourer."[79] It follows that various forms of alienation must be seen as processes of a totality or as connected processes of reproduction in which humans reproduce themselves as workers by producing products and their social relations with other humans. The fact that humans produce commodities and surplus value means that they produce each other as isolated workers and capitalists, and that, in the same act, the former alienate their labor and the products of their labor to the latter, and that the workers fall under the "yoke" of the products of their labor along with the yoke of other humans (the capitalists), who are actually also a product of alienated labor.

The reasoning for this complex process is given philosophically in the following passages.

> We must bear in mind . . . that man's relation to himself becomes for him *objective* and *actual* through his relation to the other man. Thus, if the product of his labour, his labour objectified, is for him an *alien, hostile,* powerful object independent of him, then his position towards it is such that someone else is master of this object, someone who is alien, hostile, powerful, and independent of him. If he treats his own activity as an unfree activity, then he treats it as an activity performed in the service, under the dominion, the coercion, and the yoke of another man.

A direct relationship exists between the alienation of the product and the social alienation of individuals. In other words, "Every self-estrangement of man, from himself and from nature, appears in the relation in which he places himself and nature to men other than and differentiated from himself." It follows that "In the real practical world self-estrangement can only become manifest through the real practical relationship to other men. The medium through which estrangement takes place is itself *practical.*" In conclusion,

> . . . through estranged labour man not only creates his relationship to the object and to the act of production as to powers . . . that are alien and hostile to him; he also creates the relationship in which other men stand to his production and to his product, and the relationship in which he stands to these other men. Just as he creates his own production as the loss of his reality, as his punishment; his own product as a loss, as a product not belonging to him; so he creates the domination of the person who does not produce over production and over the product. Just as he estranges his own activity from himself, so he confers upon the stranger an activity which is not his own.[80]

An immediate "consequence of the fact that man is estranged from the product of his labour, from his life activity, from his species-being, is the *estrangement of man from man.*"[81]

Thus far, I have not explicitly said much on the legend that Marx had abandoned these views in his mature years. With this legend in mind, consider now a parallel thought occurring in *Capital*:

> Since, before entering on the process, his own labour has already been alienated from himself by the sale of his labour power, has been appropriated by the capitalist and incorporated with capital, it must, during the process, be realised in a product that does not belong to him. Since the

> process of production is also the process by which the capitalist consumes labour-power, the product of the labourer is incessantly converted, not only into commodities, but into capital, into value that sucks up the value-creating power, into means of subsistence that buy the person of the labourer, into means of production that command the producers. The labourer therefore constantly produces material, objective wealth, but in the form of capital, of an alien power that dominates and exploits him; and the capitalist as constantly produces labour power, but in the form of a subjective source of wealth, separated from the objects in and by which it can alone be realised; in short he produces the labourer, but as a wage labourer. This incessant reproduction, this perpetuation of the labourer, is the sine quâ non of capitalist production.[82]

If we reconsider these comments of both the young and the mature Marx with the question of structure as the totality of social relations in mind, we realize that he is actually giving us condensed explanations of the bourgeois structure through the theory of "practical" alienation. This raises two additional issues that must be further considered. First, social alienation results in the alienation of humans from their species being. Second, social alienation demands an equally alienating method of social organization and cohesion. The following two sections explore these two issues, respectively.

4.4.1 Species Alienation

The practical alienation process discussed earlier in this chapter, according to Marx,

> changes for him the *life of the species* into a means of individual life. First it estranges the life of the species and individual life, and secondly it makes individual life in its abstract [one-sided] form the purpose of the life of the species, likewise in its abstract and estranged form.[83]

Instead of the harmony between individual life and species life, the alienated species life becomes the purpose of the one-sided, alienated individual life. This means that the processes of life alienate the social life of the essentially social being into the social life of isolated individuals. This translates into estrangement "from man's essential nature."[84] In short, "Estranged labour turns . . . *man's species-being* . . . into a being *alien* to him, into a *means* for his *individual existence*. It estranges from man his own body, as well as external nature, and his spiritual aspect, his *human* aspect . . . "[85]

It is precisely this alienation that constitutes the "universal" standpoint of Marx's opponents: "*Society,* as it appears to the political economist, is

civil society in which every individual is a totality of needs and only exists for the other person, as the other exists for him, insofar as each becomes a means for the other."[86] For Marx, this is a historical result, stemming from the development of the bourgeois mode of production, based on private property.[87]

Various aspects of Marx's later writings depend on these formulations. For instance, as we have discussed earlier, the kind of abstract labor that goes into commodities is "carried on independently and for the account of private individuals."[88] The purpose of production in this context appears to be the purpose of the alienated, isolated individuals. Likewise, Marx's theory of exploitation depends on this notion of alienation. For instance, *The German Ideology* defines exploitation as deriving "benefit for myself by doing harm to someone else . . . " In the same text, Marx links exploitation with the bourgeois conception of utility, which demands products of utility from "each ability . . . alien to it."[89] In *Capital,* he says that, in bourgeois society, the main force that brings the individuals "in relation with each other is,"

> the selfishness, the gain and the private interests of each. Each looks to himself only, and no one troubles himself about the rest, and just because they do so, do they all, in accordance with pre-established harmony of things, or under the auspices of all-shrewd providence, work together to their mutual advantage, for the common weal and in the interest of all.[90]

Marx also continuously refers to the social relations of individuals in bourgeois society as the "*bellum omnium contra omnes*." He treats this as a result of historical development, and not the natural condition of the individual and society, as it is the case with bourgeois ideology, beginning with Hobbes. Indeed, he even calls this social alienation a form of "bestiality" from which humans must be emancipated.[91] Marx also links this condition of estrangement to "complete emptiness."[92] This estrangement is further perpetuated by the ruling class narrow-mindedness, which results from excluding the working class from adequate need satisfaction and free development. For Marx, such a "narrow-minded" exclusion of one class by another constitutes a form of "inhumanity,"[93] as well as a form of species alienation.

4.4.2 ORGANIZATION OF SOCIAL PRODUCTION AND SOCIETY

It follows that the structure of bourgeois society is one of "*bellum omnium contra omnes.*" However, in *Capital,* Marx says, "man is, if not as Aristotle contends, a political, at all events a social animal."[94] The society of isolated

individuals, then, is a historical product. As discussed in Chapter 1, Marx explains, contra the bourgeois-ideological standpoint of the isolated individual:

> It is not until the 18th century, in "bourgeois society," that the various forms of the social nexus confront the individual as merely a means towards his private ends, as external necessity. But the epoch which produces this standpoint, that of the isolated individual, is precisely the epoch of the hitherto most highly developed social (according to this standpoint, general) relations. Man is a *zoon politikon* in the most literal sense: he is not only a social animal, but an animal that can isolate itself only within a society.[95]

If humans, always a social animal, lead the hitherto most isolated existence in bourgeois society, "the hitherto most highly developed social . . . relations," what then brings them collectively into an organized social force of production?

Some of the processes that help accomplish this task have been discussed earlier in this chapter. One of them is the means and processes of exchange in which individuals work on their own account and exchange values for self-gain. Another one is the dispossession of the worker. The other side of dispossession is "the capitalist . . . command over the means of subsistence," that is, over the forces of production. Hence, it follows that "concentration of large masses of the means of production in the hands of individual capitalists is a material condition for the co-operation of the wage labourers . . . " This takes the form of control over instruments, such as machines and factories, with which cooperation in production is attained. But this is not sufficient: "all combined labour on a large scale requires, more or less, a directing authority, in order to secure the harmonious working of the individual activities." [96] By virtue of their command over the means of subsistence, which are in reality products of labor, capitalists acquire the right and social power to organize and control the workers.

In this context, Marx wishes to bring out two additional alienating moments of capitalism: First, "The directing motive, the end and aim of capitalist production, is to extract the greatest possible amount of surplus value, and consequently exploit labour power to the greatest possible extent." Thus, the reason for organizing cooperation is exploitation, and not the satisfaction of collective needs or the development of the human species. Second, "the co-operation of wage labourers is entirely brought about by the capital that employs them." It goes without saying that this constitutes a form of alienation since "[t]heir union into one single productive body and the establishment of a connection between their

individual functions, are matters foreign and external to them, are not their own act, but the act of capital that brings and keeps them together." Here we are confronted with an illusory community that is held together not only by the invisible hand but also by the visible "despotism" of the capitalist and the machine over the isolated workers.[97]

Cooperation in production is generally obtained when "numerous labourers work together side by side, whether in one and the same process, or in different but connected processes . . . "[98] In capitalism, on the other hand,

> As a general rule, labourers cannot co-operate without being brought together: their assemblage in one place is a necessary condition of their co-operation. Hence wage-labourers cannot co-operate, unless they are employed simultaneously by the same capital, the same capitalist, and unless therefore their labour-powers are bought simultaneously by him.[99]

This means that "the co-operation of wage labourers is entirely brought about by the capital that employs them," on the condition that the capitalist buys their labor power individually and simultaneously beforehand. It follows from this that (a) their social relations and cooperation result from their own commodification beforehand and (b)

> Their union into one single productive body and the establishment of a connexion between their individual functions are matters foreign and external to them, are not their own act, but the act of the capital that brings and keeps them together. Hence the connexion existing between their various labours appears to them, ideally, in the shape of a preconceived plan of the capitalist, and practically in the shape of the authority of the same capitalist, in the shape of the powerful will of another, who subjects their activity to his aims.[100]

This passage describes various forms of alienation. The one that needs further elucidation here is the following:

> Being independent of each other, the labourers are isolated persons, who enter into relations with the capitalist, but not with one another. This co-operation begins only with the labour-process, but they have then ceased to belong to themselves. On entering that process, they become incorporated with capital. As co-operators, as members of a working organism, they are but special modes of existence of capital.[101]

In short, as Kolakowski notes, Marx thinks the organization of the isolated individuals is "a technological process, not a human one," which

"does nothing to overcome the isolation of the producers."[102] In other words, this process creates social cooperation and cohesion on the basis of isolation and alienation. But, given the antagonistic nature of the bourgeois society, this form of social organization also requires the bourgeois superstructure, its laws, ideas, and the state, as will be discussed in the next two chapters.

4.5 Conclusion

In *Capital,* Vol. 3, Marx says the social process of production in general

> is as much a production process of material conditions of human life as a process taking place under specific historical and economic production relations, producing and reproducing these production relations themselves, and thereby also the bearers of this process, their material conditions of existence and their mutual relations, i.e., their particular socio-economic form.

Society, when viewed "from the standpoint of its economic structure," is thus "the aggregate of these relations, in which the agents of this production stand with respect to Nature and to one another, and in which they produce." For this reason, "production proceeds under definite material conditions which are . . . simultaneously the bearers of definite social relations entered into by individuals in the process of reproducing their life."[103] The theory of alienation is precisely the detailed explanation of how, within the definite economic structure of bourgeois society, the agents of production "stand with respect to Nature and to one another" and produce their alienated social relations.

However, the relations that result from and in alienation also tell the tale of human predicaments in bourgeois society. The social relations of individuals to one another, as well as their relations to the objects and means of their labor, constitute various forms of dehumanization. This raises an important question regarding Marx's attitude toward alienation, which I have not sufficiently discussed in this chapter: is Marx merely explaining the social relations of the bourgeois society as processes of alienation, or is he also criticizing these relations?

CHAPTER 5

MARX'S CRITIQUE OF LAW, JUSTICE, AND MORALITY

5.1 INTRODUCTION

When we discuss law, justice, and morality in the Marxian context, we are necessarily discussing various moments of the superstructure. When we discuss them as moments of the superstructure of *bourgeois society,* we are also discussing ideological constructs. Ideological constructs necessarily involve inversion and alienation. In other words, the superstructure is an inversion of the alienated, "sensibly-concrete" world.[1]

In Marx's formulation, the structure and superstructure not only reciprocally interact with each other, but are also internally related in such a way that the former constitutes the "content" of the latter, or the latter is the "form" the content takes. In this scenario, content and form coexist as dialectical opposites: Content displays alienation, inequality, and bondage, whereas the form gives the appearance of freedom, equality, and community. This is what Marx often means when he says the structure "determines," or "conditions," the superstructure, or production relations determine the laws (justice), etc.

What I am proposing here is controversial. One controversy is too unproductive to be pursued extensively. It is best that we dismiss it here at once. Too many of Marx's interpreters assume that he had abandoned the theory of alienation in his mature, materialist years. Marx's own explanation of the evolution of his ideas belies this assumption:

> The first work which I undertook to dispel the doubts assailing me was a critical re-examination of the Hegelian philosophy of law; the introduction

> to this work being published in the *Deutsch-Franzosische Jahrbucher* issued in Paris in 1844. My inquiry led me to the conclusion that neither legal relations nor political forms could be comprehended whether by themselves or on the basis of a so-called general development of the human mind, but that on the contrary they originate in the material conditions of life . . . [2]

What assailed Marx partly was the issue of wood theft by the peasants, which he tried to defend on the basis of the existing legal relations.[3] As he tells us in the preceding passage, his departure from this assailing view was worked out in his early writings in which the theory of alienation and its application to legal and political relations are of paramount importance. Marx calls the above-mentioned works "the guiding principle of my studies."[4] He says this in a text that is considered to be a summary of the development of his historical materialism. Marx, then, clearly saw continuity between his early explanations that depended on the theory of alienation and his later materialist views.

In one of those early works in which he criticizes Hegel's philosophy of law (right), the young Marx says,

> The immediate *task of philosophy,* which is in the service of history, once the *holy form* of human self-estrangement has been unmasked, is to unmask self-estrangement in its *unholy forms.* Thus, the criticism of heaven turns into the criticism of earth, the *criticism of religion* into the *criticism of law,* and the *criticism of theology* into the *criticism of politics.*[5]

This statement constitutes the formula with which I shall try to explore Marx's approach to the superstructure of the capitalist social whole.

Unmasking in Marx's hands is a form of explanation and criticism. Thus, criticism, as he tells us elsewhere, should not amount to moral denying *without* understanding and explaining the existing social relations in their historical context.[6] His criticism of the "holy" superstructural moments involves unmasking "self-estrangement in its *unholy forms.*" This means that the processes and relations of alienation involved in structural relations, in the "material conditions of life," explains the moments of the superstructure. It also means that such an explanation translates into a critical evaluation of the existing social whole.

The last point raises another controversial issue. If Marx adopts a critical point of view, does his criticism amount to the claim that bourgeois social relations constitute various forms of injustice? Can we view his criticism as a form of moral criticism? It is clear that Marx refuses to adopt the language of morality and justice in his evaluation of social relations and practices. He distinguishes this mode of "ideological" criticism from

his own critical, revolutionary dialectic method. It is another main task of this chapter to explain why this is so.

Briefly stated, this chapter explores a complex set of issues. It defends the view that the theory of alienation is the basis of Marx's explanation of the superstructure and that this explanation involves critically unmasking the structural basis of the superstructure. His critical unmasking involves exposing the dehumanizing relations and processes of capitalism.

5.2 A Critique of Wood

In order to better understand the nuances of the complex exposition offered in this chapter, it would be useful to begin with a critique of Allen Wood's explanation of the Marxian theory of justice. Despite its faults, Wood's approach is more suitable for this purpose than most other approaches.[7] Wood, unlike others, seeks to explain Marx instead of imposing on him other, rather incompatible, theories of justice. Whether he succeeds in this endeavor remains to be seen.

Wood rightly states, " 'Justice' . . . , according to Marx and Engels, is fundamentally a juridical concept, a concept related to the law (Recht) and to the rights (Rechte) men have under it."[8] He also rightly concludes that in Marx's view the relation between worker and capitalist is based on "domination and servitude," which are "disguised" by justice and equal rights (Recht and Rechte), "thus giving rise to the illusion that these relations themselves are entirely the result of a voluntary contract between independent persons."[9] This illusory effect (which Marx also calls "inversion") is one of the functions of the bourgeois form of justice as Recht. Justice in Marx's usage, then, refers to the law and rights and the illusory ideology that justifies them. These conclusions closely resemble the interpretation of Marx offered in this chapter, insofar as we are dealing with Marx's *explanation* of justice as "Recht and Rechte," as legal and ideological concepts and relations. To these conclusions we must add the notion that both "the illusion" about what justice is and does and the form it takes result from alienation. In other words, the theory of alienation serves as an explanatory theory in this context, unlike what Wood says elsewhere. For Wood, alienation is simply a "diagnostic" concept.[10] In my view, the "illusion" theory of justice Wood rightly attributes to Marx is not possible without the processes of alienation.

Wood also says, "For Marx, a transaction is just on account of its function within the whole . . . "[11] Wood understands well, elsewhere, that this whole is a "concrete" whole, a "unity of the manifold."[12] A confusion results when we wonder whether Wood has in mind justice as Recht

and juridical concepts corresponding to it within the concrete whole, or a sense of moral approval by Marx of the relations involved in a transaction.[13] Wood's analysis shifts back and forth between these two positions, thus generating a paradox on Marx's behalf.

For instance, Wood arrives at the conclusion that for Marx even though "servitude is a source of misery, degradation and discontent to the worker, *it is not a form of injustice*." Here, Wood is not referring to the *legality* of workers' servitude, or its ideological consistency with the existing relations of production. He has in mind the moral meaning of justice/injustice. But perhaps realizing the difficulty involved in sustaining the claim that servitude, as a source of misery, degradation, and discontent, "*is not a form of injustice*" to be morally condemned, he offers a momentary compromise: Marx does not condemn the degradation and servitude of the worker "at all cost with an attitude of *fiat justitia, perat mundi.*" Servitude is not an "unqualified wrong." Wood offers the following explanation for this compromise:

> The servitude of capitalism, according to Marx, and even the direct slavery involved in capitalist colonies, have been necessary conditions for the development of modern productive forces. To condemn this servitude unqualifiedly would be to condemn all the productive advantages of modern society . . . Condemning a relation of servitude when it results from historical limitations on productive forces for Marx is about as rational as condemning medical science because there are some diseases it cannot cure.

Wood then goes on to suggest that the solutions for this servitude could be overcome only with further development of capitalism.[14]

There is a grain of truth in what Wood says of Marx's approach in the preceding passage. It is true that Marx considers wage slavery a necessary condition "for the development of modern conditions" and their advantages. But Wood's "medical science" is the wrong analogy in this context since Marx does not consider capitalism a practice whose development is guided by a suprahistorical telos to cure more and more social diseases.

In fact, Marx holds the opposite view of capitalism and thinks that its development inherently extends and intensifies dehumanization. An inherent tendency of capitalism is to adopt science to serve its dehumanizing processes. Like his earlier works, *Capital* is saturated with such views, one of which says:

> [W]ithin the capitalist system all methods for raising the social productiveness of labour are brought about at the cost of the individual labourer; all means for the development of production transform themselves into

> means of domination over, and exploitation of, the producers; they mutilate the labourer into a fragment of a man, degrade him to the level of an appendage of a machine, destroy every remnant of charm in his work and turn it into a hated toil; they estrange from him the intellectual potentialities of the labour process in the same proportion as science is incorporated in it as an independent power; they distort the conditions under which he works, subject him during the labour process to a despotism the more hateful for its meanness; they transform his life-time into working-time, and drag his wife and child beneath the wheels of the Juggernaut of capital. But all methods for the production of surplus-value are at the same time methods of accumulation; and every extension of accumulation becomes again a means for the development of those methods. It follows therefore that in proportion as capital accumulates, the lot of the labourer, be his payment high or low, must grow worse. The law, finally, that always equilibrates the relative surplus population, or industrial reserve army, to the extent and energy of accumulation, this law rivets the labourer to capital more firmly than the wedges of Vulcan did Prometheus to the rock. It establishes an accumulation of misery, corresponding with accumulation of capital. Accumulation of wealth at one pole is, therefore, at the same time accumulation of misery, agony of toil, slavery, ignorance, brutality, mental degradation, at the opposite pole, *i.e.,* on the side of the class that produces its own product in the form of capital.[15]

The evidence against Wood's conclusion of compromise is, thus, too overwhelming. Marx's acknowledgment of the positive side of capitalism does not lead to his justification of dehumanization in capitalism. The positive achievements of capitalism in human terms remain largely unrealized potentialities, although capitalism has managed to overcome the archaic vestiges of feudalism and "oriental despotism." This gives Marx all the more reason to condemn capitalism since it exists and operates on the basis of a fundamental contradiction between the potential for freedom and dehumanization. Various forms of dehumanization do not belong to the list of things Marx finds appealing about capitalism.

As Ziyad Husami notes, Wood's interpretation leaves Marx and the proletariat disarmed, without the "weapon of criticism" (Marx).[16] But in his reply to Husami, Wood denies doing this.[17] Instead, he argues, in spite of himself, that Marx actually condemns capitalism for being "an irrational and inhuman system, a system which exploits and dehumanizes the productive majority of society, and which is becoming increasingly unable to maintain the slaves of capital in their condition of servitude."[18] So, after all, Marx condemns capitalism, and his condemnation is based on "appeals to values such as self-actualization, community and freedom," which capitalism denies.[19]

This statement would be accurate if it were to add that Marx's "values" emanate from human nature, and not from abstract "values" as such assumed by Wood and others. Marx does not appeal to abstract values of any kind as his standpoint of evaluation. Rather, his "values" *emerge* from human needs, including "self-actualization, community and freedom," as they exist in a historical context. If so, he condemns capitalism for alienation and dehumanization, and not for violating transcendental values.

According to Wood, Marx's condemnation is *not* a moral condemnation because what capitalism denies, "self-actualization, community and freedom," are nonmoral goods. He reasons that "right and justice are juridical or moral notions. As such, they must be distinguished from non-moral goods, such as self-actualization, community, and freedom."[20] Wood's distinction between moral and nonmoral goods, which is not universally accepted, need not detain us here since we can settle this issue only by offering another "correct" definition of morality, as he does. Doing so would go against Marx's method anyway. The point is that Wood cannot do without this definition, with which he creates an isolated sphere of moral goods and another one of nonmoral goods. One of them turns out to be fair, moral, and just; the other condemnable, but not immoral. This division produces a paradox in the minds of those who believe Wood, since it lends itself to the conclusion that Marx approves or at least does not condemn the relations in one sphere, and condemns, but perhaps not on moral grounds, the relations in another. He does not realize that what capitalism violates in one sphere is an internal relation of the other, according to Marx, and that the violation of human beings constitutes the content of the "juridical or moral notions."

So what is the realm in which justice prevails, and what makes it just? Even though he is fully aware of Marx's theory of exploitation, Wood insists that

> according to Marx, the wage worker *is* generally paid the full value of his labour . . . Surplus value, to be sure, is appropriated by the capitalist without an equivalent. But there is nothing in the exchange requiring him to pay any equivalent for it. The exchange of wages for labour power is the *only* exchange between capitalist and worker. It is a just exchange . . . [21]

Of course, in Marx's analysis of the concrete whole in which different parts correspond to one another, it is true that there is nothing *in the system* that requires the capitalist to pay back the whole value created by labor. If the capitalist did that, there would no longer be a capitalist society and the capitalist would no longer be a capitalist. Wood would be entirely

correct in this regard if he were to also follow this statement with what he told us earlier, namely, that this nonrequirement is reflected in the bourgeois form of justice as Recht and its corresponding ideology, and *only* on the basis of these it is a "just exchange."

Instead, Wood constructs his argument on a notion of fairness by falsely attributing to Marx the views that "the wage worker *is* generally paid the full value of his labour" and that "wages for labour power is the *only* exchange between capitalist and worker." He deduces this claim from the notion that the realization of the surplus value does not involve the worker's labor or relation to the capitalist; therefore, "This surplus belongs to him; it never belonged to anyone else, and he owes nobody a penny for it . . . The appropriation of surplus value by capital, therefore, involves no unequal or unjust exchange." Wood's claim is only valid if we isolate the simple commodity exchange between the worker and the capitalist from the processes of surplus extraction and capital accumulation. Such an isolation would obliterate Marx's dialectical way of thinking. What is particularly troubling about Wood's explanation is that he mistakenly thinks this legal point of view represents Marx's own view. He is misled into this thought by Marx's statement, which Wood quotes: "This circumstance . . . is no injustice at all to the" worker.[22] If Marx says this, what else could Wood do but present it as Marx's view?

As we shall see later, these are not Marx's own views. They are indeed the views Marx seeks to unmask and criticize as ideological abstractions and inversions. Nor should one also think that Marx isolates the realization of the surplus value from the act in which wages are exchanged for labor power and arrives at the conclusion that "wages for labour power is the *only* exchange between capitalist and worker." In Marx's dialectical view, capitalist and worker are involved in, and therefore exchange, various types of interconnected relations, extending from the realm of production to exchange and consumption. The exchange relation for Marx is basically a "property relation," and the explanation of this relation requires providing "an exposition of all the social relations of bourgeois production."[23]

Even if we assume that Marx thinks the surplus value the capitalist appropriates is a piece of "good luck," Wood must still explain why Marx calls this appropriation, as G. A. Cohen rightly points out, a form of "theft," "embezzlement," and "robbery." But Cohen himself departs from Marx when he says these kinds of descriptions smack injustice, since no one can reasonably say that "theft" suffered by the worker can be considered just.[24] He suggests that the term *exploitation,* a form of theft, "denotes a kind of injustice."[25] For this reason, he concludes, Marx thought the exchange relation in capitalism was unjust. As for the fact that Marx also

thought it was just in the way Wood says he thought, Cohen dismissively says Marx contradicted himself without realizing it.

When Marx says the exchange relation is just and a form of robbery, he does not contradict himself. This is because when he says it is just, he does not express, as both Wood and Cohen assume, a moral judgment of approval. Indeed, as we shall see, Marx clearly thinks the bourgeois justice is an expression of the robbery and alienation involved in the capitalist exchange and production relations. To assume that this constitutes a logical contradiction is to assume that Marx's criticism of the robbery of worker's property is based on a universal notion of justice. Unlike Cohen, Marx says, "In each historical epoch, property has developed differently and under a set of entirely different social relations." This means that the legal and ideological forms corresponding to this development are themselves historical products. If so, "[t]o try to give a definition of property as of an independent relation, a category apart, an abstract and eternal idea, can be nothing but an illusion of metaphysics or jurisprudence."[26]

In conclusion, when Marx says the capitalist enslaves the worker so that he can rob him, he does not assume that he commits an act of injustice. In Marxian terms, to say that capitalist acts unjustly is to say that he violates an eternal, illusory principle of justice. Instead, Marx considers the acts of enslavement and robbery as violations of human beings. His condemnation of such violations does not focus on blaming the capitalist for being immoral. Rather, his focus is on the totality of the material conditions of life in capitalism as a whole.

5.3 THE INVERSION OF MARX

The conclusion offered in the preceding paragraph needs to be proven. The remainder of this chapter is an attempt to prove this conclusion, which, at this point of our discussion, remains a hypothesis. To begin with, if Marx condemns capitalism, then we cannot attribute to him the stance of moral positivism. Moral positivism states that "there is no moral standard but the one which exists; that what is, is reasonable and good . . . The practical aspect of this theory is this. A moral criticism of the existing state of affairs is impossible, since this state itself determines the moral standard of things."[27] Several popular passages in Marx's various writings appear to lend themselves to a relativist or moral-positivist interpretations of Marx. Wood's interpretation of Marx uneasily suggests both. By examining these passages in this section, I will argue that neither position should be attributed to Marx.

One such oft-cited passage, which Wood quotes (see earlier in text), says the following:

> The circumstance, that on the one hand the daily sustenance of labour power costs only half a day's labour, while on the other hand the very same labour power can work during a whole day, that consequently the value which its use during one day creates, is double what he pays for that use, this circumstance is, without doubt, a piece of good luck for the buyer, but by no means an injury to the seller.[28]

It is surprising that many of his qualified interpreters, since Eduard Bernstein's time, have been erroneously thinking that this is Marx's own view. Indeed, it was Bernstein who first popularized the view, also proposed by Cohen and others, that Marx contradicts himself when he also depicts this exchange as a form of exploitation.[29]

In order to see the error involved in this conclusion, no high theory is necessary. The very next sentence says, "Our capitalist foresaw this state of things, and that was the cause of his laughter."[30] About two pages earlier, Marx tells us that he is here considering the viewpoint of "our capitalist who is at home in his vulgar economy . . . ,"[31] as Husami also points out.[32] In fact, we must understand that Marx often adopts this strategy of exposition. He begins with the main assumptions of his opponents in order to transform them dialectically through a process of unmasking. The conclusion in this passage, then, reflects the moral, ideological viewpoint of the capitalist, who considers his fortune "a piece of good luck" and no "injury" to the worker. Here, the laughing capitalist personifies the juridical viewpoint and the ruling ideas of bourgeois society. Marx's task, then, is to explain the material basis of this ideological and juridical viewpoint, as we will discuss in the subsequent sections.

Another suspicious passage is found in Marx's rebuttal against Adolph Wagner's interpretation of his own work. The "obscurantist," says Marx,

> falsely attributes to me [the view] that "the *surplus value* produced by the labourers *alone* was left to the capitalists in an improper way."[33] Well, I say the direct opposite, namely, that commodity production is necessarily, at a certain point, turned into "capitalistic" commodity production, and that according to the *law of value* governing it, "surplus value" is properly due to the capitalist and not to the labourer . . .

It should be noted beforehand that the debate here is primarily on whether or not the surplus value is produced by the laborer "alone."[34] If we read another passage from the same text, this becomes clear. In response to Wagner's claim, Marx says:

> On the contrary, I depict the capitalist as the necessary functionary of capitalist production and demonstrate at great length he not only "deducts" or "robs" but enforces the *production of surplus value,* thus first helping what is

> to be deducted; what is more, I demonstrate in detail that even if *only equivalents* were exchanged in the exchange of commodities, the capitalist—as soon as he pays the worker the real value of his labour-power—would have every right, i.e. such right as corresponds to this mode of production, to *surplus-value*.[35]

Marx continues with a crucial clarification, "But all this does not make 'profit on capital' the '*constitutive*' *element* of value but only proves that the value not '*constituted*' by the labour of capitalist conceals a portion which he can appropriate 'legally,' i.e. without infringing the law corresponding to the exchange of commodities."[36]

Two significant conclusions must be drawn from these passages. First, unlike Wood's claim that only the capitalist contributes to the creation of surplus value, Wagner attributes to Marx the more popular and plausible view that only the worker is involved therein. Marx rejects both by saying that the capitalist *also* contributes. Second, unlike Wood's interpretation, Marx, in the same passage, says that the capitalist "robs" the worker, but, like Wood, claims this is consistent with his right. However, this seemingly contradictory statement does not produce a "paradox" as Cohen assumes. Marx clearly says that the capitalist has this right "legally" and robs the worker without "infringing the law corresponding to the exchange of commodities," which is the basis of this legal right. What he does not say is that this a fair exchange because it involves the exchange of equivalent values. In fact, when he says "even if *only equivalents* were exchanged," he assumes equivalents are *not* exchanged, in the final analysis.

In short the exchange between the worker and the capitalist is "just" in the sense that the surplus the capitalist appropriates is his legal right and that this right is just because it corresponds to the mode of production that gives rise to it. This strongly implies that Marx thinks justice is relative to the mode of production in which it exists.

Marx repeats this theory elsewhere: "content is just whenever it corresponds, is appropriate, to the mode of production. It is unjust whenever it contradicts that mode. Slavery on the basis of capitalist production is unjust; likewise fraud in the quality of commodities."[37] Like the ones quoted earlier in this section, this passage too gives the false impression that Marx either justifies slavery or remains scientifically indifferent toward it. In the first instance, we note that Marx *does not* say slavery is appropriate for human beings when it corresponds to the mode of production in which it exists. He says it is just in the legal sense and is justified by the dominant ideas of the society in which it exists. This becomes obvious if we read the same statement further.

This statement is a response to Gilbart's claim: "That a man who borrows money with a view of making a profit by it, should give some portion of his profit to the lender, is a self-evident principle of natural justice." Marx's response is revealing:

> To speak here of natural justice, as Gilbart does, is nonsense. The justice of the transactions between agents of production rests on the fact that these arise as natural consequences out of the production relationships. The juristic forms in which these economic transactions appear as willful acts of the parties concerned, as expressions of their common will and as contracts that may be enforced by law against some individual party, cannot, being mere forms, determine this content. They merely express it.[38]

Marx is specifically rejecting the claim that the right of the lender constitutes an eternal and external, "self-evident" principle of natural justice. His main point in all passages is that each mode of "production relationships" produces its own justice as a "juristic" *form* and that the system of justice-as-juristic-form arises from its content, that is, the production relations. Regarding slavery, Marx is actually stating a simple fact: direct slavery is lawful in slave societies and unlawful in bourgeois society in which only wage slavery is lawful. Said differently, Marx is saying that the superstructure of society coincides with its structure.

Does this mean Marx refuses to condemn, or even approves of, slavery? As we have discussed earlier, Wood says, "The servitude of capitalism, according to Marx, and even the direct slavery involved in capitalist colonies, have been necessary conditions for the development of modern productive forces." This presumably furnishes evidence, along with the earlier comment on slavery, that Marx does not unqualifiedly condemn the capitalist form of slavery. Others, based on the false distinction between the humanist and the scientific Marx, make even a stronger claim. The mature Marx, it is said, "identified what 'ought to be' with the dialectical movement of history. With this identification he not only deprived himself of the moral leverage for criticizing history which was implicit in his humanism, but also provided a justification for anything and everything that happens, no matter how cruel or inhuman."[39] Or Marx regards "pre-communist individuals as so many sheep for the slaughter."[40] These conclusions are utterly groundless.

Chapter 2 had discussed that Marx thought Russia could not only develop without following the path of Western nations, but should also avoid "all the fatal vicissitudes of the capitalist system."[41] This does not strike a note of indifference toward or endorsement of human suffering

on Marx's part for the sake of communism. As for the human suffering in colonies, Wood and countless others have in mind the concluding paragraph of Marx's article "The British Rule in India," which says:

> England, it is true, in causing a social revolution in Hindostan, was actuated only by the vilest interests, and was stupid in her manner of enforcing them. But that is not the question. The question is, can mankind fulfill its destiny without a fundamental revolution in the social state of Asia? If not, whatever may have been the crimes of England she was the unconscious tool of history in bringing about that revolution.[42]

In this paragraph, Marx is asking a rhetorical question by using some Hegelian terminology ("the unconscious tool of history"), with the hope that the British horrors in India would produce a social revolution. In this respect, he wishes to see India go forward and not back, since, however "inoffensive" some of its previous institutions might have been, its social structure nevertheless established a "solid foundation of Oriental despotism." He adds,

> We must not forget that these little communities were contaminated by distinctions of caste and by slavery, that they subjugated man to external circumstances instead of elevating man to the sovereign of circumstances, that they transformed a self-developing social state into never changing natural destiny, and thus brought about a brutalizing worship of nature, exhibiting its degradation in the fact that man, the sovereign of nature, fell down on his knees in adoration of Kanuman, the monkey, and Sabbala, the cow.

Thus, not only the British colonization made going back impossible by breaking "down the entire framework of Indian society, without any symptoms of reconstitution yet appearing,"[43] but also there is not much in human terms to go back to. Going back would imply returning to various forms of human degradation.

Marx is equally critical of the "stupid" British enforcement of its "vilest interests" on India, and of India's caste system. What is placed under a positive light is the fact that the colonization of India helped undermine the "degradation" of humans inherent in the slavish caste system and in the worship of Kanuman and Sabbala. In other words, Marx is not justifying the suffering of Indians under colonization so that history can proceed toward a supra-historical, pre-given teleological end. He is hoping for a social revolution that would abolish both colonization and the caste system.

As it is the case with his journalistic writings on the colonies, Marx's dialectical view forces him to acknowledge the positive side of slavery.[44] Such acknowledgments may indeed confuse us unless we bother to understand the nuances involved in them. In no instance does Marx refuse to condemn the negative side.[45] Furthermore, in no instance does he call for the enslavement of people for some greater historical end. Marx always searches for the available possibilities within the existing conditions to elevate humankind to become "the sovereign of circumstances." This is his primary motive in highlighting the positive side, for without the positive, the project of emancipation would have no material basis. I will further elucidate the nature of Marx's condemnation of slavery in the subsequent sections of this chapter.

5.4 Alienation as the Explanation of Bourgeois Justice and Rights

I have thus far mostly offered a general description of how Marx understands the concept of justice. In fact, most interpretations of Marx's approach to the concept of justice remain at this limited level. This and the next section provide a more detailed account of Marx's explanation of this concept.

The explanatory relationship Marx establishes between bourgeois rights and alienation is too obvious to be missed in *On the Jewish Question.* Many scholars overlook this work and the relationship between alienation and rights (justice in this sense) because of the rather silly idea that the materialist Marx had abandoned the notion of alienation.

In *On the Jewish Question,* Marx tells us that instead of being independent, eternal and external expressions of free will, the "rights of man" simultaneously contain and conceal social alienation: "Above all, we note the fact that the so-called rights of man, the *droits de l'homme* as distinct from the *droits du citoyen,* are nothing but the rights of a *member of civil society, i.e.*, the rights of egoistic man, of man separated from other men and from the community."[46] The liberty afforded by the right to private property is the "liberty of man as an isolated monad, withdrawn into himself . . . " It is " . . . based not on the association of man with man, but on the separation of man from man. It is the *right* of this separation, the right of the *restricted* individual, withdrawn into himself."[47] In sum,

> None of the so-called rights of man, therefore, go beyond egoistic man, beyond man as a member of civil society, that is, an individual withdrawn into himself, into the confines of his private interests and private caprice, and separated from the community. In the rights of man, he is far from

> being conceived as a species-being; on the contrary, species-like itself, society, appears as a framework external to the individuals, as a restriction of their original independence. The sole bond holding them together is natural necessity, need and private interest, the preservation of their property and their egoistic selves.[48]

Thus, when examined from the angle of civil rights, bourgeois justice, according to Marx, reflects and governs alienation in antagonistic society. The alienated relations constitute the essence of bourgeois rights. The sources of alienation, and hence rights, must be found in the alienated processes of everyday life.[49] *The German Ideology* adds a historical perspective to this: "Civil law develops simultaneously with private property out of the disintegration of the natural community."[50] The bourgeois society represents the historically specific "disintegration of the natural community" into the antagonistic, fragmented, alienated civil society. The modern civil law develops simultaneously along with this disintegration.

In his later writings, the origin of bourgeois rights is to be found in the alienated social relations inherent in the commodity production[51] and, by extension, commodity exchange. To begin with, and to repeat from Chapter 4, "*Products of labour* would not become commodities, were they not products of separate *private labours* carried on independently of one another."[52] As we have discussed in that chapter, these "private labours" constitute a form of alienation and explain why products (wealth as private property) take the form of commodities in bourgeois society.

We have also seen that "private labours" implies commodified labor power, and the exchange of the latter itself is an essential condition for the conversion of products into commodities as private property. This means that labor power itself must appear in the market as a commodity (private property), that is, as a necessary condition of the products themselves becoming commodities (private property). But, says Marx,

> labour-power can appear upon the market as a commodity, only if, and so far as, its possessor, the individual whose labour-power it is, offers it for sale, or sells it, as a commodity. In order that he may be able to do this, he must have it at his disposal, must be the untrammelled owner of his capacity for labour, i.e., of his person.[53]

Thus, what John Locke, for instance, assumes to be a natural right of self-ownership as the basis of private property[54] is actually the result of commodified labor power of the alienated, isolated individuals, according to Marx.

In short, the realm of commodity exchange and circulation, behind which lurks the exchange of commodified labor power, "is in fact a very Eden of the innate rights of man."

> There alone rule Freedom, Equality, Property and Bentham. Freedom, because both buyer and seller of a commodity, say of labour-power, are constrained only by their own free will. They contract as free agents, and the agreement they come to, is but the form in which they give legal expression to their common will. Equality, because each enters into relation with the other, as with a simple owner of commodities, and they exchange equivalent for equivalent. Property, because each disposes only of what is his own. And Bentham, because each looks only to himself.[55]

We shall not repeat here how "Freedom, Equality, Property and Bentham" in this context involve social alienation and egotism, and consequently the alienation of humans from their species being. The conclusion we arrive at is that the so-called innate rights of humans follow from the very logic of the exchange of commodified labor power and, by extension, the exchange of other commodities.

In conclusion, the "rights of man" in bourgeois society are based on the exchange of exchange values. The latter itself is based on the commodification of labor power, that is, its exchange as an exchange value for equivalent values. But, as we will discuss, this is only a one-sided relation, based on a too narrow abstraction. It must be understood more concretely in a broader context through its other immediate and necessary relations.

5.5 Justice and Rights as Inverted Reality

Continuing these thoughts, Marx repeats dialectically that "the process of exchange of exchange values developed in circulation not only respects freedom and equality, but is also their real basis, while they are its products." Moreover, "As pure ideas," freedom and equality "are idealized expressions of . . . [of the] various moments . . . " of the exchange process. When they are "developed in juridical, political and social relations, they are merely reproduced in other degrees."[56] Thus, the capitalist exchange relation is the basis of the juridical relations, which, together, respect the "freedom and equality" of the agents involved in the exchange of exchange values.

What binds the wills of different agents involved in the exchange process is an enforceable contract. This holds true of the exchange relation between the wage laborer and the capitalist, which is the essential relation. But Marx says in *Capital:* "The Roman slave was held by fetters; the

wage labourer is bound to his owner by invisible threads. The appearance of independence is kept up by means of a constant change of employers, and by the *fictio juris* of a contract."[57] Thus, the contract gives the appearance of independence (freedom and equality) of a relationship in which the wage laborer is actually enslaved.

What we have now is a dual relationship based on independence in exchange relation and slavery in production relation. These are not isolated relations, but necessary moments of the contradictory whole. Taken on its own, each relation reveals only one side of the contradiction, and thus reveals no contradiction at all. To capture the more complex, internally related, contradictory reality, Marx's dialectical inquiry broadens the vantage point of investigation to establish not only that the concrete reality has more sides to it, but also that each side becomes the other in and through a process of reproduction.

This becomes clear when Marx discusses this issue from the broader vantage point of the "two acts" in which money is converted into capital (these two acts are simultaneous). In these acts, Marx brings together production and circulation relations:

> The whole movement that money performs to be converted into capital therefore falls into two distinct processes: the first is an act of simple circulation, purchase on one side, sale on the other; the second is the consumption of the purchased article by the buyer, an act which lies outside circulation, takes place behind its back. The consumption of the purchased article, in consequence of the latter's specific nature, here itself constitutes an economic relation. In this consumption process the buyer and the seller enter into a new relation with each other, which is at the same time a *relation of production* . . .

Apart from the "new relation," which is discussed further in the "second act" later in text, the "first act" is the moment of the social whole in which the standpoint of equivalent exchange finds its basis:

> The first act fully corresponds to the laws of commodity circulation, to which it belongs. Equivalents are exchanged for equivalents. The money owner pays out on the one hand the value of the material and means of labour, on the other hand the *value* of the labour capacity. In this purchase he therefore gives in money exactly as much objectified labour as he withdraws from circulation in the form of commodities—labour capacity, material of labour and means of labour. If this first act did not correspond to the laws of the exchange of commodities, it could not appear at all as the act of a mode of production whose foundation is namely that the

> most elementary relationship individuals enter with each other is that of commodity owners . . . [58]

An essential premise of the simple commodity circulation, in which "equivalents are exchanged for equivalents," is the necessary presupposition that the participants are commodity owners, and as such they are the bearers of the right to dispose of their commodity products and their commodified human powers as they wish.

But Marx is not content with the views that remain limited to the first act. He criticizes Proudhon for this very reason, when he says that Proudhon "wishes to reduce the exchange between capital and labour to the simple exchange of commodities as exchange values, to reduce them to moments of simple circulation, i.e. he abstracts precisely from the specific distinction upon which everything depends."[59] When Marx expands the level of abstraction to include another internally related essential act, the existence of a fundamental contradiction comes into his purview:

> The second act displays a phenomenon which in its result and its conditions is not only entirely alien to the laws of simple circulation but even appears to be at odds with it. In the first place, the social position of the seller and the buyer changes in the production process itself. The buyer takes command of the seller, to the extent that the latter himself enters into the buyer's consumption process with his person as a worker. There comes into being, outside the simple exchange process, a relation of domination and servitude, which is however distinguished from all other historical relations of this kind by the fact that it only follows from the specific nature of the commodity which is being sold by the seller; by the fact, therefore, that this relation only arises here from purchase and sale, from the position of both parties as commodity owners, therefore in itself once again includes political, etc., relationships.[60]

What conceptually begins as the free and equal exchange between commodity (property) owners within the simple circulation process results in a master-slave relationship, a relationship of domination in which the "social position of the seller and the buyer changes." The forms of equality and freedom appearing in the simple exchange relation as the basis of the social relation between the worker and the capitalist now becomes its own dialectical opposite: "servitude and domination." By *dialectical opposite*, we are to understand a form of contradiction in which freedom and servitude mutually support and oppose each other simultaneously. The same type of contradiction also exists between equality

displayed in the first act and inequality displayed in the exploitation of the worker.

Furthermore, both the simple exchange relation of the worker and the capitalist as commodity owners and the production relationship in which the latter takes command of the former "include political relationships." In other words, the law also bestows on the capitalist the right to command the worker as well as the right to own the products of the latter's labor. In this manner, the politico-juridical makes its way into what necessitated it in the first place.

Since the bourgeois legal-ideological standpoint adopts the vantage point of the first act alone, all it sees is equality and freedom as the basis of legal rights. This vantage point of the first act also conceals another important fact. What the worker receives back is his own past labor, appropriated without an equivalent:

> The exchange of equivalents, the original operation with which we have started, has now become turned around in such a way that there is only an apparent exchange. This is owing to the fact, first, that the capital which is exchanged for labour power is itself but a portion of the products of others' labour appropriated without an equivalent; and, secondly, that this capital must not only be replaced by its producer, but replaced together with an added surplus. The relation of exchange subsisting between capitalist and labourer becomes a mere semblance appertaining to process of circulation, a mere form, foreign to the real nature of the transaction, and only mystifying it. The ever repeated purchase of and sale of labour power is now the mere form . . .

Behind the veil of this mystification, "what really takes place is this—the capitalist again and again appropriates, without an equivalent, a portion of the previously materialized labour of others, and exchanges it for a greater quantity of living labour." This, then, is the essential exchange relation of capitalism, without which capitalism would cease to exist. The exchange of equivalent exchange values between the worker and the capitalist is merely an "apparent exchange," or a "mere form." The point that the exchange of equivalent exchange values is a mere "form" does not make this form of exchange unnecessary. Marx repeatedly tells us that this is a necessary precondition of capitalist production.

The right to private property, which emanates from the exploitation of the surplus value, becomes the means with which the capitalist exploits the worker. In other words, the legal (superstructural) element now comes to determine what determined it in the first instance in a circular dialectic. As Marx puts it,

> At first the rights of property seemed to us to be based on a man's own labour. At least, some such assumption was necessary since only commodity owners with equal rights confronted each other, and the sole means by which a man could become possessed of the commodities of the others, was by alienating his own commodities; and these could be replaced by labour alone. Now, however, property turns out to be the right, on the part of the capitalist, to appropriate the unpaid labour of others or its product, and to be the impossibility, on the part of the labourer, of appropriating his own product. The separation of property from labour has become the necessary consequence of a law that apparently originated in their identity.[61]

This transformation, as he further explains elsewhere, also requires that

> the right to property on the side of capital is transformed into the right of property in alien labour, the right to appropriate alien labour without equivalent; on the side of labour capacity, it is transformed into the duty to relate itself towards its own labour or its own product as *alien property*. The right to property is inverted into the right on the one side to appropriate alien labour and the duty on the other side to respect the product of one's own labour and one's own labour itself as values belonging to others.[62]

The legal right of the capitalist to "alien property" of alienated labor power is nothing if not a form through which alienated, unpaid labor becomes mystified and respected, as "justice," expressed as an independent legal relation existing between equal and free individuals. On the other hand, what the workers do not have legal right to is not legally theirs, according to the logic of capitalist mode of production, or the law of value governing commodity production. But what is not being violated, according to Marx and *not* the legal standpoint, is *only* the "legal relation" of "equality and freedom," which is a "mere *appearance,* and a *deceptive appearance* . . . "[63]

If we leave this deceptive legal standpoint aside, and get to the bottom of things, human beings are violated in the process:

> On leaving this sphere of simple circulation or of exchange of commodities, which furnishes the "Free-trader Vulgaris" with his views and ideas, and with the standard by which he judges a society based on capital and wages, we think we can perceive a change in the physiognomy of our dramatis personae. He, who before was the money owner, now strides in front as capitalist; the possessor of labour-power follows as his labourer. The one with an air of importance, smirking, intent on business; the other, timid and holding back, like one who is bringing his own hide to market and has nothing to expect but—a hiding.[64]

5.6 FURTHER CLARIFICATIONS

This section further clarifies several important issues pertaining to Marx's explanation and criticism of bourgeois exchange relations. First, Marx repeatedly calls this a form of exchange that involves "theft." Why Marx *does not* call this "theft" a form of injustice is clear: the theft of surplus value is completely within the legal rights of the capitalist. It is not illegal. However, why he calls it a form of "theft" is not immediately obvious.

In *Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy,* Marx says the "present wealth" is "*the theft of the alien labour time*."[65] But, for reasons already explained, the fact that alienation is involved in this "theft" means that theft itself is inverted and concealed as justice, as a fair, equal exchange based on free will. Thus, justice is a form of deception. It conceals at least as much as it displays. Marx says that once the deception is shed off through the critical dialectic of inversion ("unmasking"), "[t]he recognition" that the products are the workers' "own" leads to the "awareness" that the entire relationship is "improper and imposed by force."[66]

In *Capital,* Vol. 1, Marx concludes:

> To accumulate, is to conquer the world of social wealth, to increase the mass of human beings exploited by him, and thus to extend both the direct and the indirect sway of the capitalist . . . Moreover, the capitalist gets rich . . . in proportion to . . . the same rate as he squeezes out the labour power of others, and enforces on the labourer abstinence from all life's enjoyments . . . They enrich themselves chiefly by robbing . . . [67]

Later on, he says, "In actual history (of capital accumulation) it is notorious that conquest, enslavement, robbery, murder, briefly, force play the great part."[68] The forceful nature of the capitalist extraction process is a core reason why Marx criticizes exploitation and not, as we shall see later, because it violates some equal-income principle or because some individuals receive more value than the value they help create.

Capital, Vol. 3, arrives at the very same conclusion: "We saw . . . that capital . . . pumps a definite quantity of surplus-labour out of the direct producers, or labourers; capital obtains this surplus-labour *without an equivalent,* and in essence always remains *forced labour*—no matter how much it may *seem* to result from free contractual agreement" [emphases added].[69] Clearly, Marx thinks the idea that free and equal agents exchange equivalent values is the appearance, the ideological form, the content of which is a relation of forced servitude involving robbery, that is, the exploitation of the "surplus-value *without an equivalent.*"

As for the legal concept of "theft," as opposed to the actual relation of robbery, Marx uses the bourgeois standpoint against itself. If proper ownership requires free and equal transaction, then the capitalist exchange and ownership relations contradict their own standpoint because neither one of these requirements obtains beyond one-sided appearances. Indeed, according to the bourgeois standpoint, " '*theft*' is a forcible violation of property," and "*presupposes the existence of property* . . . ," of bourgeois property in this case. It follows that the legal conceptions of " '*theft*' apply equally well to the '*honest*' gains of the bourgeois himself."[70] Thus, on its own account of theft and justly acquired property, the capitalist robs the worker, since the surplus is extracted by force. Forcing human beings into the production of any kind of value or property is not taken lightly by Marx as a mere fact, regardless of the society in which it takes place. Here, a general standard for evaluation emerges: it is not proper to force and enslave human beings, whose essence is free activity, or to use them for alien purposes as mere means. What is indisputably true is that from the moment of his emergence on the intellectual and political scene until his death, Marx always condemned all forms of slavery, be it in feudalism, the colonies, North America, or bourgeois society.

Another related clarification on the question of theft would be useful. It is not the mere act in which an individual, or a group of individuals, appropriate-consume the value created by others that Marx condemns as a form of exploitation. Indeed, Marx himself advocates communistic distributive schemes in which appropriation and consumption would be based on the needs of the individuals, and not on the magnitude of the value they produce.[71] Instead, Marx condemns the extraction of the surplus value for its harmful consequences: "Along with the constantly diminishing number of the magnates of capital, who usurp and monopolise all advantages . . . , grows the misery, oppression, slavery, degradation, exploitation . . . " of the worker.[72] Third, again for related reasons, Marx's condemnation of capitalism is not reducible to the issue of low income, as some scholars assume. For instance, against the argument that rapid capital accumulation must be supported because it improves the material condition of the working class, Marx maintains that the rapid accumulation of capital means increasing the domination of capital ("hostile forces") over the worker. Thus, increased wages do not solve the problem Marx identifies, over and over again, as "slavery."[73]

In a very late stage in his writings, Marx makes another unambiguous statement on this very issue: "the system of wage labour is a system of slavery, and indeed of a slavery which becomes more severe in proportion as the social productive forces of labour develop, whether the worker receives

better or worse payment."[74] Likewise, to say that capitalism should be abolished because it cannot provide more than a low maximum in wages, as Lassalle argues, is tantamount to saying, "Slavery must be abolished because the feeding of slaves in the system of slavery cannot exceed a low maximum."[75] Here, Marx repeats his long-standing position, which he had already formulated in the *Manuscripts of 1844*: "An enforced *increase of wages* . . . would therefore be nothing but *better payment for the slave,* and would not win for the worker or for labour their human status and dignity."[76]

5.7 MARX'S "MORAL" CRITICISM AND HIS CRITIQUE OF MORALIZING CRITICISM

These comments strongly suggest that Marx's criticism of capitalism is a moral criticism. This is a controversial conclusion, which, perhaps, Marx himself would have had hard time accepting. As many Marx scholars point out, Marx often criticized those who offered a moral criticism of society and its various relations. We could solve this dilemma by offering a definition of morality that would include or exclude Marx's criticism of human suffering in capitalism. But such an approach would wound up interpreting Marx's dialectical thought undialectically. Marx develops his critical ideas dialectically through criticism. If so, we must understand his approach to morality and justice as a moral concept of right and wrong through his critique of moralizing criticism of various stripes.

5.7.1 MARX'S CRITIQUE OF KANT AND STIRNER

Marx's criticism of the *existing* moral theories rests on the same basis as his criticism of ideology. What they share in common is the inversion of the alienated reality into eternal concepts and judgment. Kant's moral philosophy, for instance, is ideological in this sense, according to Marx:

> The characteristic form which French liberalism, based on real class interests, assumed in Germany we find again in Kant. Neither he, nor the German middle class, whose whitewashing spokesman he was, noticed that these theoretical ideas of the bourgeoisie had as their basis material interests and a *will* that was conditioned and determined by the material relations of production. Kant, therefore, separated this theoretical expression from the interests which it expressed; he made the materially motivated determinations of the will of the French bourgeois into *pure* self-determinations of "*free will,*" of the will in and for itself, of the human will, and so converted it into purely ideological conceptual determinations and moral postulates.[77]

This passage characterizes, generally, Marx's view of existing moral approaches, as inverted ideological viewpoints of the existing antagonistic social relations, which wound up "whitewashing" the existing conditions and relations. It cannot be otherwise, since the Kantian standard of criticism is the standard of the very social relations it intends to criticize. This is to say, since the ideas being used are derived from the structural, concrete relations, they are not really critical.

It should be remarked here that Kant explicitly rejects associating moral laws with anything other than a priori universal laws, which are to be deduced from reason as opposed to being induced from experience. According to Kant, "moral laws . . . are valid as laws only insofar as they can be seen to have an a priori basis and to be necessary. Indeed, concepts and judgments concerning ourselves and our actions and omissions have no moral significance at all if they contain only what can be learned from experience."[78] The word "only" in the last sentence complicates Kant's intentions, though this is not the place to elaborate on this complication. Marx basically thinks that Kant did not, and indeed could not, succeed in producing a priori, universal concepts. Rather, he separated the theoretical expressions of the existing, alienated social experience and presented them as universal moral postulates. Theoretical expressions of morality and justice cannot exist in a vacuum.

One might choose to pause here and accuse Marx of moral positivism, of saying that the existing state of affairs cannot be criticized. But this would be a rushed conclusion since the preceding passage speaks of ideological "whitewashing" of "shameless bourgeois profit-making."[79] In another instance, Marx refers to the capitalists' "shameless and ruthless lack of moderation" in keeping the working hours at a reasonable level, which affects the "physical, moral, and intellectual" well-being of the working class.[80] These sentences suggest the presence of some "moral" evaluation on Marx's part, even though he does not say the shameless endeavors of capitalists violate any moral principles.

Thus, Richard Miller rightly thinks that Marx found morality to be an unfit category for his criticism.[81] However, Miller's conclusion is also reinforced by an understanding of morality that is peculiar to Kantianism. It therefore mistakenly reduces all notions of morality to the dictates of Kantian morality,[82] which clearly does not include all philosophical traditions. Marx, it is true, finds Kant's method of moral philosophy highly problematic, but never rejects his view, or anyone else's similar view for that matter, that the world is *not* as it ought to be.[83] Indeed, Marx shares many of Kant's concerns, which, according to Marx, are undermined by the existing, antagonistic social relations.[84] Instead of resorting to moral

postulates as his point of departure in resolving them, Marx advocates the revolutionary abolition of such relations.

In terms of understanding and solving the problems facing humanity with moral injunctions, Marx often has in mind Max Stirner. According to Marx, Stirner "believes Don Quixote's assurance that by a mere moral injunction he can without more ado convert the material forces from the division of labour into personal forces."[85] Thus, "Sancho" believes that by "'getting out of one's head' a few 'fixed ideas'," he could "make everyone happy and able to enjoy life."[86] This point illustrates an important reason as to why Marx criticizes some of the moralizing thinkers, such as Kant and Stirner. His criticism has nothing to do with anyone's attempt to address human suffering, but rather, in this context, has much to do with the reduction of social problems that undermine essential human needs to personal moral shortcomings and their resolution to individual virtue.

5.7.2 MARX'S CRITIQUE OF HEINZEN

Marx's criticism of Heinzen gives us another perspective on why he is critical of moralizing criticism. At the foundation of Heinzen's moralizing criticism lies a misapplication of the dialectical method of negation and a misunderstanding of historical development.

According to Marx, generally speaking,

> Any development, whatever its substance may be, can be represented as a series of different stages of development that are connected in such a way that one forms the negation of the other. If, for example, a people develops from absolute monarchy to constitutional monarchy, it negates its former political being. In no sphere can one undergo a development without negating one's previous mode of existence.[87]

For the moralizing critic, "Negating translated into the language of morality means denying." By reducing moral negation to denying, "the philistine as critic can condemn any development without understanding it; he can solemnly set up his undevelopable undevelopment beside it as moral immaculateness." Thus, any historical development, process of negation, can be criticized from the standpoint of a fixed, preconceived notion of perfection.

According to Marx, this notion of "immaculateness" in moralizing criticism is a product of "stigmatized history," which transposes "the age of innocence, the golden age, into pre-history, into the time when no historical development at all took place, and hence no negating and no

denying." Thus "in noisy eras of revolution, in times of strong, passionate negation and denial, as in the 18th century, there emerged honest, well-meaning men, well-bred, respectable satyrs like Gessner, who oppose the undevelopable state of the idylls to the corruption of history."[88] The concept of "undevelopable" implies a perfected state of being, not in need of further development. From this point of view, all historical change is deemed corrupt (the profane), and therefore subjected to moral denial, as a departure away from the original, idyllic condition (the sacred). Every development represents the fall of humans, so to speak.

Instead of the Kantian a priori universal laws, based on reason, this view takes a "stigmatized" historical period as its moral standard of evaluation. What ties this moralizing criticism to other prevailing notions of morality-as-ideology is the assumption of some eternal standpoint, a "fixed idea" with which historical periods are judged. Moralizing criticism of Heinzen, of course, also departs from Hegel's moral positivism, which sees nothing but positive development (becoming) in history and justifies all that develops in it in contrast to the past, less developed stages. Historical negation for Hegel is the confirmation of the development of the Idea and its glory. For this reason, any critical denial of the present is itself denied. While Hegel commits himself to understanding development and negation without denying, the moralizing critic denies without understanding development.

It is well worth noting that Marx, like Hegel, recognizes the affirmation of the positive side of development in capitalism in contrast to feudalism, but he also underlines the devastating effects of capitalism on human beings. In fact, he considers both the positive and the negative of the present stage as being unsurpassed by any other historical stage: "On the one hand, there have started into life industrial and scientific forces which no epoch of former human history had ever suspected. On the other hand, there exist symptoms of decay, far surpassing the horrors recorded of the latter times of the Roman Empire."[89] The question we must ask rhetorically here is, what, according to Marx, constitutes decay and horror?

The fact that he does not adequately grasp development, according to Marx, also forces Heinzen into blunders regarding the issue of "injustice" in property relations.

For instance, Heinzen argues that "[i]njustice in property relations is only maintained by (political) power." This suggests, according to Marx, two possible ways of understanding such an "injustice." The first possibility is that Heinzen understands injustice as the "pressure to which the absolute monarchy still subjects the bourgeoisie even in its 'most sacred' interests . . . " In this case, by

> expressing a truth as eternal as it was original, he has only expressed the fact that the German bourgeoisie must conquer political power . . . He is only expressing, with some emotion, a transient relationship between the German bourgeoisie and the German state power, as an eternal truth, and thereby showing how to make a "solid core" out of a "movement."[90]

In other words, Heinzen is confusing, if this is what he has in mind, a historical, "transient" relationship with an eternal notion of injustice (as morality), inflicted upon the bourgeoisie by the state. He does not realize that the conflict between the state and the bourgeoisie represents the transitional stage of development in which the bourgeoisie has not fully developed into a class and that the "injustice" against it is a historical product.

Or Heinzen understands "'injustice in property relations' as the economic conditions of the workers, in which case his pronouncement has the following meaning:"

> The present *bourgeois* property relations are "maintained" by the state power which the bourgeoisie has organised for the protection of its property relations. The proletariat must therefore overthrow the political power where it is already in the hands of the bourgeoisie. It must itself become a power, in the first place a revolutionary power.[91]

According to Marx, in both scenarios, Heinzen is necessarily speaking of "injustice in property relations" as a historically developed "injustice," even though he does not realize that he is doing this. In both cases, he pretends to have in his possession an eternal moral truth. According to Marx, "injustice in property relations" must be understood within the context of the historical development of bourgeois property relations.

But there is another element involved in these comments that informs Marx's understanding of justice and injustice. In both cases, the rectification of this "injustice," according to Marx, requires capturing political power, since "injustice" is organized politically, in the final analysis, for the "protection" of the existing property relations. We have seen earlier that Marx goes so far as to argue that this "injustice" is the basis of bourgeois justice as *Recht*. In some sense, Marx is repeating Rousseau's critical view of justice (law) as the political perpetuation of slavery and inequality in society, based on private-property relations.[92]

If "injustice" cannot be derived from some eternal idea of justice, or from some imagined idyllic condition, then what is its practical basis? According to Marx, the "injustice in property relations" for the workers is "determined by the modern division of labour, the modern form of exchange, competition, concentration, etc." It "by no means arises from

the political rule of the bourgeois class, but vice versa, the political rule of the bourgeois class arises from these modern relations of production which bourgeois economists proclaim to be necessary and eternal laws."[93] In other words, property relations are historical and not "necessary and eternal laws." It follows that the "injustice" implied in property relations is itself a product of historical development, and its denial (negation) must necessarily assume political struggle. Marx, contra Heinzen, sides with the "communists" and "Engels," whom Heinzen criticizes, in arguing for the necessity to overthrow the existing property relations. We shall further explain why Marx and the "communists" think this is necessary. His answer has nothing to do with moral positivism.

5.7.3 Marx's Critique of Proudhon

Marx's criticism of Proudhon's handling of contradictions will allow us to further understand why Marx criticized the ideology of justice without plunging into moral positivism. We shall also further understand how Marx's own dialectic handles contradictions in historical development, and is in essence "critical revolutionary."

According to Marx, whereas in his early work Proudhon took the Kantian position that contradictions are insoluble, through Marx's influence, he later adopted the Hegelian dialectic, which attempts to solve contradictions and further develop concepts: "In place of *Kant's* insoluble *'antinomies,' the Hegelian 'contradiction'* was to be introduced as the means of development."[94] However, instead of an effective dialectic, one that treats social contradictions in their historical development and develops concepts through their critical analysis and inner connections, Proudhon's approach "is made up of on-the-one-hand and on-the-other-hand." This stems from his failed attempt to "present the *system* of economic categories dialectically," despite his "natural inclination for dialectics." Proudhon's such "petty-bourgeois" style of dealing with contradictions leads him to see in all categories a good side and a bad side, a positive and a negative part.[95] As Marx explains in *The Poverty of Philosophy,*

> For him, M. Proudhon, every economic category has two sides—one good, the other bad. He looks upon these categories as the petty bourgeois looks upon the great men of history: *Napoleon* was a great man; he did a lot of good; he also did a lot of harm.
>
> The *good side* and the *bad side,* the *advantages* and *drawbacks,* taken together form for M. Proudhon the *contradiction* in every economic category.

> The problem to be solved: to keep the good side, while eliminating the bad.[96]

This approach misinforms Proudhon's take on property and justice. Accordingly,

> The upshot is at best that the bourgeois legal conceptions of "*theft*" apply equally well to the "*honest*" gains of the bourgeois himself. On the other hand, since "*theft*" as a forcible violation of property *presupposes the existence of property,* Proudhon entangled himself in all sorts of fantasies, obscure even to himself, about *true bourgeois property*.[97]

By eliminating the negative side, "theft," the good side of property, "honest gains," is preserved as the *true,* "just," form of property; that is, in Marx's words, "true bourgeois property." The reason Proudhon "entangles himself" here is that he proceeds from a legal conception of theft, which he mistakenly thinks is an eternal concept. In doing so, he does not realize that the same conception of theft, as "forcible violation of property," also applies to what is considered an "honest gain."

Proudhon's approach, according to Marx, also does not recognize the internal relation of contradictory moments, as we have seen in Chapter 3. As a consequence, by dropping the bad side, he maintains bourgeois private property in its good form as an "honest gain," not realizing that the bourgeois form of property is not possible without the "bad side," that is, without the alienation of labor and the exploitation (theft as forcible violation) of surplus value created by it. As Marx repeatedly reminds his opponents, the bourgeois form of property, as well as the bourgeois mode of production as a whole, is not possible without the forceful extraction of surplus value, and it is precisely this that counts as just, or "honest gain."

Proudhon, unlike Marx,[98] proceeds from an eternal concept of property. But if there is no abstract, eternally existing concept of property and justice, then how can Proudhon conceive of one? According to Marx, he gets it, like Kant, from the existing bourgeois relations of property by taking the bourgeois legal conception of "true" property as his point of departure. Thus,

> instead of regarding *economic categories as the theoretical expression of historical relations of production, corresponding to a particular stage of development in material production,* he garbles them into pre-existing *eternal ideas,* and how in this roundabout way he arrives once more at the standpoint of bourgeois economy.

This, says Marx, shows that Proudhon did not succeed in penetrating "into the secret of scientific dialectics," and ended up sharing the "illusions of speculative philosophy."[99]

This is also a reason as to why Marx thought Proudhon could not become a revolutionary, despite his socialistic pretensions. His method of development hurls him back to where he starts, the bourgeois standpoint, instead of abolishing this standpoint through the revolutionary abolition of the historical conditions and relations of production that give rise to it. For this reason, the ("Socialistic bourgeois") approach Proudhon takes, as *The Communist Manifesto* states, amounts to the preservation of bourgeois society without its social ills:

> The Socialistic bourgeois want all the advantages of modern social conditions without the struggles and dangers necessarily resulting therefrom. They desire the existing state of society, minus its revolutionary and disintegrating elements. They wish for a bourgeoisie without a proletariat. The bourgeoisie naturally conceives the world in which it is supreme to be the best; and bourgeois Socialism develops this comfortable conception into various more or less complete systems. In requiring the proletariat to carry out such a system, and thereby to march straightway into the social New Jerusalem, it but requires in reality, that the proletariat should remain within the bounds of existing society, but should cast away all its hateful ideas concerning the bourgeoisie.[100]

Marx's critical dialectic designates the "historical relations of production," as the essential basis of real contradictions and, through their criticism, unearths the "disintegrating elements" and, elsewhere, "the revolutionary, destructive aspect which will overthrow the old society."[101] From a different angle, Marx here arrives at the same conclusion as the one he reaches in opposition to Kant, Stirner, and Heinzen. Real criticism must develop out of the criticism of the existing society and into its dialectical, revolutionary overthrow. This is not simply a logical necessity, but one that seeks to emancipate the working class, and therefore the entire society in real, practical terms. It is understandable, then, that Steven Lukes plausibly calls Marx's critical approach "morality of emancipation."[102] Call it what we may, Marx was too critical and revolutionary to be called moral positivist or a scientific indifferentist.

5.7.4 Marx's Critique of Darwinism

The revolutionary intentions of Marx are too indisputable. Once we bear this in mind, we realize that Marx was neither a fatalist nor a proponent of scientific indifferentism. He explicitly opposes all of these traditions

in *The Poverty of Philosophy.*[103] Ignoring all these, some of his supporters have admired and his critics have accused him of a form of Darwinism. His scientific view of the evolution of society, for this reason, is often associated with the latter doctrine. On this issue, we find two camps: one attributing to Marx an ethical theory based on social Darwinism;[104] the other accusing Marx of a Darwinist theory of economic evolution of society in which humanist criticism plays no part.

Marx, it is true, admired Darwin's discoveries. He privately wrote to Engels that Darwin's "*Natural Selection* . . . , in the field of natural history, provides the basis of our views," in spite of Darwin's "crude English" method of development.[105] Repeating the same thoughts later, in a letter to Lassalle, he writes,

> Darwin's work is most important and suits my purpose in that it provides a basis in natural science for the historical class struggle in history. One does, of course, have to put up with the clumsy English method of development. Despite all shortcomings, it is here that, for the first time, "teleology" in the natural science is not only dealt a mortal blow, but its rational meaning is empirically explained.[106]

From this first look at Darwin's theory, Marx notes the presence of "the crude English method of development" along with its "very important accomplishments."

However, upon reconsidering Darwin's work, Marx had something more specific to say about the "deficiencies." In a letter he wrote to Engels, on June 18, 1862, Marx says:

> I'm amused that Darwin, at whom I've been taking another look, should say that he *also* applies the "Malhusian" theory to plants and animals. As though in Mr. Malthus' case the whole thing didn't lie in it *not* being applied to plants and animals, but only—with its geometric progression—to humans as against plants and animals. It is remarkable how Darwin rediscovers, among the beasts and plants, the society of England with its division of labour, competition, opening up of new markets, "inventions" and Malthusian "struggle for existence." It is Hobbes' *bellum omnium contra omnes* and is reminiscent of Hegel's *Phenomenology,* in which civil society figures as an "intellectual animal kingdom," whereas, in Darwin, the animal kingdom figures as civil society.[107]

Marx's "another look" here is closely pertinent to the theory of *bellum omnium contra omnes* as a presumed human natural law. Marx rejects using this theory as a substitute for the natural condition of humans, precisely because the implied competitive individualism in this context,

the war of all against all, is for him a product of historical development. This war of all against all is a condition of the isolated individuals in civil society (bourgeois society). It is, in other words, a condition of alienation from which humans must, and can, emancipate themselves.

We get a clearer sense of this improperness in another letter with the same theme. In this letter, to Laura and Paul Lafargue, written seven years after the one sent to Engels, Marx briefly returns to the question of civil society, Darwin, and Darwinism: "Darwin was led by the struggle for life in English society—the competition of all with all, *bellum omnium contra omnes*—to discover competition . . . as the ruling law of 'bestial' and vegetative life." Marx concludes: "Darwinism . . . considers this (law) a conclusive reason for human society never to emancipate itself from its bestiality."[108]

In a sense, but for different reasons, Darwinism, as Marx summarizes it, is a form of nonteleological fatalism, which lends itself also to indifferentism. It takes alienation in society as a natural condition of humanity. Whether or not Darwin would accept the view attributed to him here is another issue. That Marx distanced himself from all forms of fatalism and indifferentism is well worth remembering when we speak of his critical human science. In addition, we may deduce from his criticism of Darwinism the conclusion that, despite the overlap between them, Marx's science is not exactly a natural science in the Darwinian sense. The latter lacks the subjective and humanist elements of the former. Human societies are not exactly animal or plant kingdoms.

5.8 The Revolutionary "Rupture with the Traditional Ideas"

We have discussed that Marx thinks the *existing* moral criticisms are inverted from the antagonistic social relations and are ideologically presented as eternal ideas. It is claimed that Marx, in *The Communist Manifesto,* wants to abolish all morality for this reason.[109] This mistaken claim comes from a misunderstanding of Marx and Engels's response to the accusation that the communists ignore "eternal truths, such as Freedom, Justice, etc., that are common to all states of society. But, Communism abolishes eternal truths, it abolishes all religion and all morality, instead of constituting them on a new basis; it therefore acts in contradiction to all past historical experience."[110]

The Communist Manifesto responds: "All property relations in the past have continually been subject to historical change consequent upon the change in historical conditions."[111] The communistic intention of abolishing *private* property, thus, cannot be a violation of some universal

notions of justice, since notions of justice and morality governing private property are themselves "the outgrowth of the conditions of . . . bourgeois production."[112] In this context, Marx does not "clearly" seek to abolish *all* morality. This is the charge he says the opponents of communism level against the communists, and Marx has no problem with abolishing morality *if* it means "eternal ideas" that justify the existing property relations. But since such ideas are ideological constructs, according to Marx, the main point here reduces itself to his claim that the ideas of morality and justice are "the outgrowth" of the existing material conditions. This is the message that *The Communist Manifesto* clearly conveys in this particular regard. This message is consistent with Marx's other discussions of this issue in various books, as illustrated earlier in text.

More importantly, *The Communist Manifesto* explicitly reveals the possibility and development of a revolutionary, critical consciousness. It states: "The Communist revolution is the most radical rupture with traditional property relations," which are "antagonistic." It is on the basis of this practical radical rupture that the development of communism "involves the most traditional rupture with traditional ideas."[113] It follows that the ideas, the "theoretical conclusions" of the communists, "express, in general terms, actual relations springing from an actual class struggle, from a historical movement going on under our very eyes." From these contradictory social relations arises the critical negation of them, in theory and action. Thus, "the theory of the Communists may be summed up in the single sentence: Abolition of private property."[114] This abolition (negation) involves, at its core, the revolutionary abolition of the existing, antagonistic social relations.

Here we must highlight the obvious, since it is often ignored. Unlike Hegel, Marx does not reduce all ideas to the ideas of the existing state of affairs. He offers ideas that dialectically contradict such affairs. In Hegel's philosophy, the absence of this contradiction results in moral positivism, in the absence of criticism. In Marx's, it does not. However, unlike utopianism, "the theoretical conclusions of the Communists" spring out of the development of the existing mode of production and the contradictory class relations on which this mode of production is based. They are not "based on ideas or principles that have been invented, or discovered by this or that would-be universal reformer."[115]

The question, then, becomes: Why does Marx take the revolutionary road, and intend to abolish private property by abolishing the production relations that give rise to it? The reasons given for this intention in *The Communist Manifesto* collectively point toward some sense of normative criticism. These include the fact that private property is based on the

"exploitation of the many by the few."[116] This exploitation gives a dominant "social status" to the capitalists, with which they "command" the labour of others.[117] The bourgeois society sinks the worker to the level of "bare existence." Unlike communism, the system based on private property "does not promote the existence of the worker." It makes workers "dependent" and leaves them without "individuality."[118] These are all but forms of human suffering, stemming from various forms of alienation.[119]

Marx's criticism of moral criticism is based on his revolutionary criticism of the existing state of affairs, which has a humanistic-practical basis.

5.9 Conclusion

At this point, it would be useful, albeit briefly, to compare Marx's critical dialectic with critical theory. Much like Marx's dialectic method, critical theory combines philosophical and practical questions; identifies, through criticism of both, practical and normative problems; and, in Max Horkheimer's words, seeks human emancipation both in "theory" and in "practice."[120] Thus, critical theory is "explanatory, practical, and normative, all at the same time." It explains, critically, what is wrong with the current society and declares its goal to be "man's emancipation from slavery,"[121] from the enslaving conditions of such a society.

As Horkheimer further adds, elsewhere, critical theory "has as its object human beings as producers of their own historical form of life." [122] From this follows the conclusion that critical theory assumes a conception of human essence as its standpoint, not only in terms of explaining the first premise of all motion and development in history and society, but also in explaining what is "wrong with current society." According to Horkheimer, "critical thought has a concept of man as in conflict with himself until this opposition is removed."[123] As Marcuse puts it in the same spirit, "When the essence of man becomes the object of inquiry . . . , the relation of essence and appearance is posited as a historical disproportion."[124] It is this historical disproportion that Marx sums up as various forms of human alienation in bourgeois society.

An important aspect in Marx's approach, however, distinguishes it from critical theory. The latter generally focuses on the elucidation of human suffering as "cultural" decay, and offers a somewhat passive optimism for the future that such suffering can be limited, through a "critical attitude" toward the "declining culture." Marx's critical-revolutionary dialectic focuses on *political action* to achieve emancipation from such

suffering and articulates, in addition to the "negative" attitude of critical theory, a positive vision of future society as the goal of action.[125]

This means that Marx's critical dialectic has three interrelated theoretical and practical phases: criticism based on understanding the actual conditions and development of the present society, revolutionary action, and the practical resolution of the conflict between essence and existence in a future society. Since the three are interrelated, each one makes fuller sense in its dialectical development into the other. For this reason, Marx's critical-revolutionary dialectic, which seeks to abolish inhumanity of the present and construct the future on more humane basis, is also manifest in his theory of revolution and future society. Even though I have not said much about Marx's theory of revolution and the future society,[126] the present chapter, I hope, has shown that Marx's criticism has important affinities with critical theory, and not with dry scientific indifference and moral positivism.

Explaining why Marx does not couch his criticism in the vocabulary of justice and morality required us to explain how Marx often understood these terms. We have seen that Marx thinks of them as ideological ideas, or politico-juridical forms, emanating from the processes and relations of alienation in bourgeois society. This explanation, not coincidentally, gives a more nuanced exposition to Marx's claim that the structure determines the superstructure.

CHAPTER 6

THE STATE IN BOURGEOIS SOCIETY

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The explanation of the basis of bourgeois law (justice, rights) offered in the last chapter also provides a basis for understanding Marx's theory of the state, since the legal system is a moment of the state. The bourgeois state is determined, in some sense, by the same alienated social relations reflected in its laws. But the state also enforces laws and therefore partakes in, and autonomously determines, the structure. If so, the nature of its involvement in social relations is a dialectical one. The logic of state autonomy in bourgeois society, that is, the logic of its ability to administer and rule, emanates from the logic of the alienated society it rules.

In the contemporary academic literature on the state, "autonomy" has become the buzzword with which the state is defined and explained. Often, the state, among other things, is defined as an "autonomous entity," with its own interests and will that set it apart from the various parts of society, such as interest groups, classes, and so on. Many proponents of this neo-Weberian view see their theory of the state as a superior alternative to Marx's presumed reductionist view of the state, which, again presumably, ignores the autonomy of the state.[1]

While it is true that many Marxists have subscribed to such deterministic views of the state in the past, it would be a grave interpretive error to count Marx among them.[2] However, if we were to ask Marx to comment on the present-day state, society, and their relationship, he would likely refer us to his criticism of *The Gotha Program,* where he says,

> "Present-day society" is capitalist society, which exists in all civilized countries, more or less free from medieval admixture, more or less modified by

> the particular historical development of each country, more or less developed. On the other hand, the "present-day state" changes with a country's frontier. It is different in the Prusso-German Empire from what it is in Switzerland, and different in England from what it is in the United States. The "present-day state" is therefore a fiction.[3]

The diversity of the present-day states, however, does not lead to the conclusion that a general theory of the present-day state is futile. As Marx concludes, "the different states of the different civilized countries, in spite of their motley diversity of form, all have this in common: that they are based on modern bourgeois society, only one more or less capitalistically developed. They have, therefore, also certain essential characteristics in common."[4]

Marx's general theory of the modern state, then, is derived from his general theory of bourgeois society, which is an abstraction that focuses on the essential characteristics of this society, more or less, in its developed form. Nevertheless, most of Marx's explicit and extensive analyses of the development of the modern, bourgeois state are historical. Such historical analyses focus on the formation of the modern states within diverse societies. While these types of analyses often aim at providing a general theory of the state, they also explain the variation in the states' autonomy and institutional form. They explain why some states, under specific conditions, are more or less autonomous.

If states exercise autonomy, then the theory of society as an organic whole must be restated: different moments are internally related and exist as necessary parts of the organic whole in a way that their internal relations do not reduce each part to the others completely. In other words, the organic unity of different parts is based on the understanding that each part is also, in some sense, a separate, differentiated sphere, which is not to be confused with inorganic separation of spheres based purely on external relations. The separation of different spheres is relative, and the autonomy of each is therefore also relative.

This chapter mostly examines Marx's theory of the relative autonomy of the state. It shows that Marx not only accounts for the state's autonomy, which he often calls its "independence," but also explains the structural basis of this autonomy. In this sense, the independence of the modern state *depends* on the division of labor in bourgeois society. For this reason, I argue, the terms "independence" and "dependence" in Marx's usage are relative.

The division of labor in bourgeois society explains the modern state from a variety of angles. It shows why the centralized nation-state came into being historically and why such a state, in turn, was necessary in the

formation of national society in the form of civil society. Marx argues that a consequence of this reciprocal development is the rise of the state bureaucracy and bureaucratic-state interests. In some sense, this sets the state above and against the society it rules, though it never suspends the state in mid-air (Marx), as it is the case with some of the neo-Weberian approach to the state.

But a more nuanced analysis of the division of labor in *bourgeois* society shows that this division is based ultimately on alienated labor and social relations, according to Marx. Such a division of labor envisions an antagonistic society, based not only on the antagonism between the main classes in this society but also on the various fragments of each class and the further fragmentation of society into isolated individuals. For this reason, Marx provides a multilayered explanation of the state, each layer emphasizing a different aspect of alienation. If so, what is commonly known as Marx's class theory of the state is a subcategory of his alienation theory of the state. This is to say, Marx's structural explanation of the state is the same as the humanist theory of the state, based on alienation. In what follows, "antagonistic," "fragmented," "competitive" society will be treated as the equivalent terms of "social alienation," as it is articulated in Chapter 4.

6.2 Development of the Modern State and Its Antagonism with Society

Marx's writings on the French politics of the nineteenth century, such as *The Class Struggles in France, The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte, The Civil War in France,* and various less known articles, offer a complex theory of the state, often from a historical perspective.

Historically, according to Marx, the development of the modern French state meant the centralization of political power:

> The first French Revolution, with its task of breaking all separate local, territorial, urban, and provincial powers in order to create the civil unity of the nation, was bound to develop what the monarchy had begun, centralization, but at the same time the limits, the attributes, and the agents of the governmental power. Napoleon completed this state machinery.[5]

This development corresponded to the development of bourgeois society and its division of labor: "The Legitimist Monarchy and the July Monarchy added nothing but a greater division of labour, growing in the same measure as the division of labor inside the bourgeois society created new groups of interests, and, therefore, new material for the state administration."[6] The new groups of interest in society, based on the

bourgeois (capitalistic) division of labor, necessitate centralized political administration.

This development of the bourgeois society also requires "breaking all separate local, territorial, urban, and provincial powers in order to create the civil unity of the nation." It cannot be otherwise in a mode of production in which production requires extensive social division of labor and a market that correlates to this division. The bourgeois mode of production, then, puts the entire society into a common intercourse, which requires a centralized political power and *civil* unity, with a common code of law and shared territory. *The Communist Manifesto* expresses this development from the angle of the bourgeoisie:

> The bourgeoisie keeps more and more doing away with the scattered state of the population, of the means of production, and of property. It has agglomerated population, centralised the means of production, and has concentrated property in a few hands. The necessary consequence of this was political centralisation. Independent, or but loosely connected provinces, with separate interests, laws, governments, and systems of taxation, became lumped together into one nation, with one government, one code of laws, one national class-interest, one frontier, and one customs-tariff.[7]

Because of this development, furthermore,

> Every *common* interest was straightway severed from the society, counterposed to it as a higher, *general* interest, snatched from the activity of society's members themselves and made an object of government activity, whether it was a bridge, a schoolhouse and the communal property of a village community, or the railways, the national wealth, and the national university of France.[8]

The development propelled by the development of the division of labor in bourgeois society, thus, generates tasks that only a centralized state can perform independently in the name of "general interest," as opposed to "common" interest. Among them is the provision of public goods in the form of infrastructure, though, as we shall discuss, the state also provides other necessary public goods and functions, such as administration, security, and justice. This explains, from one specific angle, the independence of the state.

The development of the independent, centralized, bureaucratic state power does not necessarily prevent the state from becoming also a "class instrument." Indeed, within the same context in *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte,* in which he explains the development of the

state's independence, Marx also concludes, "under the absolute monarchy, during the first revolution, under Napoleon, bureaucracy was only the means of preparing the class rule of the bourgeoisie. Under the Restoration, under Louis Philippe, under the parliamentary republic, it was the instrument of the ruling class, however much it strove for power of its own."[9]

Here, we get an important hint: the state strives for its own power even when it becomes "the instrument of the ruling class." This means that the state and society, or its various ruling fragments, enter into a power struggle with the development of the bourgeois state and society. The same socioeconomic reasons that require the state to develop as an independent power also propel the classes in this society to capture this state power.

The ability of the modern state to exercise political power over the entire society accounts for, in part, why different parties in society seek to capture the state, or exercise political sway in and through it. This is because the bourgeois society is "lumped together into one nation" in which every solitary interest is pertinent to the general interest and the pursuit of their specific interests requires the "parties" involved to assert their will as political law, that is, as the general will. For this reason, says Marx, "The parties that contended in turn for domination regarded the possession of this huge state edifice as the principal spoils of the victor."[10]

This makes the state also a topos of class struggles, since all the struggles for domination in society are political struggles that must crystallize as state functions and laws in a complex, developed society. This is why Marx says, elsewhere, that "the struggle of class against class is a political struggle,"[11] or *"Every class struggle is a political struggle*."[12] More dialectically stated, as Marx warns Proudhon, "Do not say that social movement excludes political movement. There is never a political movement which is not at the same time social."[13] Marx's correction of Proudhon assumes that social and political are internally related.

Under certain conditions, the state prevails, suggesting that Marx does not assume an inevitable process of development that would guarantee the political triumph of the bourgeoisie. Under Louis Bonaparte, who came after Louis Philippe's rule, which was an "instrument of the ruling class," Marx says the state was no longer an instrument of class rule. Indeed, it turned against the bourgeoisie after it was dominated by this class:

> The bourgeoisie apotheosized the sword; the sword rules it. It destroyed the revolutionary press; its own press has been destroyed. It placed popular meetings under police surveillance; its salons are under the supervision of the police. It disbanded the democratic National Guards, its own National

> Guard is disbanded. It imposed a state of siege; a state of siege is imposed upon it. It supplanted the juries by military commissions; its juries are supplanted by military commissions. It subjected public education to the sway of the priests; the priests subject it to their own education. It transported people without trial, it is being transported without trial. It suppressed every stirring in society by means of the state power; every stirring in its society is suppressed by the state power. Out of enthusiasm for its purse, it rebelled against its own politicians and men of letters; its politicians and men of letters are swept aside, but its purse is being plundered now that its mouth has been gagged and its pen broken. The bourgeoisie never wearied of crying out to the revolution what St. Arsenius cried out to the Christians: "*Fuge, tace, quiesce!* Flee, be silent, keep still!" Bonaparte cries to the bourgeoisie: "*Fuge, tace, quiesce!* Flee, be silent, keep still!"[14]

But Marx tells us, even "the complete independence of the state" does not make it "suspended in mid air."[15] The "completely independent" state, then, depends on the society it dominates, and is therefore never *completely* independent of or external to the society it rules. Given the fragmented nature of the French society in which no group could dominate the others politically, which is a precondition for the state's "complete" independence, Louis Bonaparte found support in the peasantry and among the "lumpen proletariat," "drunken soldiery," and so on.

Marx's analysis of the French peasantry offers a significant relationship between the degree and nature of independent state power and the political ability of the important forces in society:

> . . . the great mass of the French nation is formed by the simple addition of homologous magnitudes, much as potatoes in a sack form a sack of potatoes. Insofar as millions of families live under economic conditions of existence that separate their mode of life, their interests, and their culture from those of the other classes, and put them in hostile opposition to the latter, they form a class. Insofar as there is merely a local interconnection among these small-holding peasants, and the identity of their interests forms no community, no national bond, and no political organisation among them, they do not constitute a class. They are consequently incapable of enforcing their class interest in their own name, whether through a parliament or through a convention. They cannot represent themselves, they must be represented.[16]

A generalizable lesson of this passage is that the inability of the important sectors of the society to represent themselves, or to assert themselves politically, makes the absolutist state possible. In other words,

> Their representative must at the same time appear as their master, as an authority over them, as an unlimited governmental power that protects

> them against the other classes and sends them rain and sunshine from above. The political influence of the small-holding peasants, therefore, finds its final expression in the executive power subordinating society to itself.[17]

According to Marx, the small-holding peasants are structurally incapable of directly asserting their will as political will within the modern state, and must therefore be represented. But under certain conditions, even the national classes, such as the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, cannot represent themselves and must be subordinated to the autonomous state. Two such common conditions are their underdevelopment and fragmentation resulting from social conflict. Indeed, we can surmise that the latter condition is always more or less present even in developed bourgeois societies.

The other side of this explanation of the absolutist state, of course, is that the development of the bourgeois society into national classes necessitates a different regime type—the term "class" in Marx's usage is always associated with the ability of an economic group to organize itself nationally and politically. As Marx states elsewhere, "the constitutional or republican representative state" is the corresponding political form of developed bourgeois society.[18] Taking this explanation even further, Marx thought the dictatorship of the proletariat would necessarily take the form of real democracy in which the working class would reign supreme.[19]

On the whole, the centralization and bureaucratization of state power are common attributes of the modern state. Their independence derives, in part, from the division of labor in modern, bourgeois society. Whether or not the state becomes an instrument of class rule, or a force against the ruling class, and the degree of its independence, are contingent upon the existing social and political circumstances. The modern state, however, never loses its autonomy completely and, once in place, always treats itself and its corporate interests as an end in itself.

6.3 The State as an "End in Itself"

For some of the reasons already discussed briefly earlier in text, the centralization of the state power comes with its bureaucratization. In a preparatory draft to *The Civil War in France,* Marx sums up this development poignantly:

> The seignorial privileges of the medieval lords and cities and clergy were transformed into the attribute of a unitary state power, displacing the feudal dignitaries by salaried State functionaries, transferring the arms from

> medieval retainers of the landlords and the corporations of townish citizens to a standing army, substituting for the checkered anarchy of conflicting medieval powers the regulated plan of a state power, with a systematic and hierarchic division of labour. The first French Revolution with its task to found national unity (to create a nation) had to break down all local, territorial, townish and provincial independences. It was, therefore, forced to develop, what absolute monarchy had commenced, the centralization and organization of state power, and to expand the circumference and the attributes of the state power, the number of its tools, its independence, and its supernaturalist sway of real society, which in fact took the place of the medieval supernaturalist heaven, with its saints.[20]

It follows from this development that "Every minor solitary interest engendered by the relations of social groups was separated from society itself, fixed and made independent of it and opposed to it in the form of state interest, administered by state priests with exactly determined hierarchical functions."[21] One significant point made here is the relationship between the "solitary interests . . . of social groups" and the independence of the state. We shall return to this issue later in text. The second one is the rise of the bureaucracy ("state priests"). Because of its necessary and autonomous position emanating from the division of labor in society, the bureaucracy acquires the ability to treat its own corporate interests as an end in itself.

The development of the modern state in Germany explains an underpinning reason for this. As *The German Ideology* points out,

> during the epoch of absolute monarchy, which assumed here [in Germany] its most stunted, semi-patriarchal form, the special sphere which, owing to division of labour, was responsible for the administration of public interests acquired an abnormal independence, which became still greater in the bureaucracy of modern times. Thus, the state built itself up into an apparently independent force, and this position, which in other countries was only transitory—a transition stage—it has maintained in Germany until the present day.[22]

The peculiar development of Germany prepared the grounds for the "abnormal independence" of the state, which allowed the state to build and "maintain" itself as an "independent force." Once in place, then, the state bureaucracy has a tendency to maintain its own independence and even pursue its own particular interests as the universal will.

This latter point made in *The German Ideology,* which sounds Weberian, was developed philosophically by Marx long before Weber developed his theory of the state and bureaucracy.[23] What Marx explores

is a continuation of the view expressed in his *Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right,* in which he says:

> Since by its *very nature* the bureaucracy is the "state as formalism" it is this also regards its *purpose.* The actual purpose of the state thus appears to the bureaucracy as an objective *hostile* to the state. The spirit [mind] of the bureaucracy is the "formal state spirit." The bureaucracy therefore turns the "formal state spirit" or the *actual* spiritlessness of the state into a categorical imperative. The bureaucracy takes itself to be the ultimate purpose of the state. Because the bureaucracy turns its "formal" objectives into its content, it comes into conflict everywhere with "real" objectives. It is therefore obliged to pass off the form for the content and the content for the form. State objectives are transformed into objectives of the department, and department objectives into objectives of the state. The bureaucracy is a circle from which no one can escape. Its hierarchy is a *hierarchy of knowledge.* The top entrusts the understanding of detail to the lower levels, whilst the lower levels credit the top with understanding of the general, and so all are mutually deceived.[24]

It follows that

> In the case of the individual bureaucrat, the state objective turns into his private objective, into a *chasing after higher posts,* the *making of a higher career.* In the first place, he looks on actual life as something *material,* for the *spirit of this life has its distinctly separate existence* in the bureaucracy. The bureaucracy must therefore proceed to make life as material as possible. Secondly, actual life is material for the bureaucrat himself, i.e., so far as it becomes an object of bureaucratic manipulation; for his spirit is prescribed for him, his aim lies beyond him, and his existence is the existence of the department. The state only continues to exist as various fixed bureaucratic minds, bound together in subordination and passive obedience. *Actual* knowledge seems devoid of content, just as actual life seems dead; for this imaginary knowledge and this imaginary life are taken for the real thing. The bureaucrat must therefore deal with the actual state jesuitically, whether this jesuitry is conscious or unconscious. However, once its antithesis is knowledge, this jesuitry is likewise bound to achieve self-consciousness and then become deliberate jesuitry.
>
> Whilst the bureaucracy is on the one hand this crass materialism, it manifests its crass spiritualism in the fact that it wants to *do everything,* i.e., by making the *will* the *causa prima.* For it is purely an *active* form of existence and receives its content from without and can prove its existence, therefore, only by shaping and restricting this content. For the bureaucrat the world is a mere *object* to be manipulated by him.[25]

But it must be emphasized that the way bureaucrats pursue their own interests, or the interests of the bureaucracy as a whole, depends on the character of "the world" as the "object of . . . [their] action." This world may require bureaucrats to pursue the interests of different classes, especially the dominant class, the society as a whole, or, at times, turn against various sections of the society administered. If the bureaucrats function in a fully developed capitalist society, their interests must necessarily, if not perfectly, coalesce with the interests of maintaining capitalism and the interests of the dominant capitalist class. These are the views that will further emerge later in text.

In short, the state bureaucracy always "squats" within the world in which it functions, and is therefore never fully independent of it in the sense that it and its interests are never "suspended in mid air." They are embedded in the material the bureaucracy works on, that is, on the alienated society it manages. Marx argues, contra Hegel, that the public affairs " 'matters of general concern' have to be *represented* somewhere in the state as 'actual' and therefore 'empirical matters of general concern.' They must appear somewhere in the crown and robes of the general, which thereby automatically becomes a role, an illusion."[26] They appear within the executive, in other words, as its internal relation in an inverted way, as an illusion that these emanate from the bureaucratic, state mind as universal concerns. Thus, the independence of the state is not derived from an independent universal rationality, as Hegel assumed. The independence and generality of the executive of the state, rather, should be sought in the *particularism* of civil society.[27]

6.4 THE HISTORICAL AGENCY OF THE STATE

The agency of the state, that is, its autonomous, active role in determining the bourgeois society, is both historical and sociological. This section discusses these two forms of political determination.

It is not true that Marx thinks the bourgeois state (superstructure) develops, in a simple time sequence, after the development of the forces and relations of production (structure), as some argue (see Chapter 3). Indeed, some of Marx's explanations highlight the historical agency of the state in making capitalism possible.

Marx makes it clear that the state played a key role in the primitive accumulation of capital, which depended on making "free labor" possible, even in England, where capitalism first organically developed. In *Capital,* after a detailed account of the centuries-long process of enclosures in England, *which various kings and queens helped make possible*, Marx reaches the following conclusion:

> The spoliation of the church's property, the fraudulent alienation of the State domains, the robbery of the common lands, the usurpation of feudal and clan property, and its transformation into modern private property under circumstances of reckless terrorism, were just so many idyllic methods of primitive accumulation. They conquered the field for capitalistic agriculture, made the soil part and parcel of capital, and created for the town industries the necessary supply of a "free" and outlawed proletariat.[28]

The connection of this development and the state is explicitly stated elsewhere:

> For instance, when the great English landowners dismissed their RETAINERS, who had consumed with them the SURPLUS PRODUCE of their land; when their tenant farmers drove out the small cottagers, etc., then a mass of living labor power was thrown on to the *labour market,* a mass which was free in the double sense: free from the old client or bondage relationships and obligatory services, and free also from all goods or chattels, from every objective and material form of being, *free from all property.* It was reduced either to the sale of its labour capacity or beggary, vagabondage, or robbery as its only source of income. History records that it tried the latter first, but was driven off this road and on to the narrow path which led to the labour market by means of the gallows, pillory, and whip.

It follows, in conclusion, that " . . . the *governments* [of] Henry VII, VIII, etc., appear as conditions of the historical process of dissolution and as creators of the conditions for the existence of capital."[29]

In *Capital,* again, Marx observes that "capital in embryo—when beginning to grow . . . secures the right of absorbing a *quantum sufficit* of surplus labour, not merely by the force of economic relations, but [also] by the help of the state . . . " The lengthening of the working-day was necessary for this absorption of sufficient quantity of surplus labor for the primitive accumulation of capital. "Hence . . . the lengthening of the working-day, which capital, from the middle of the 14th to the end of the 17th century, tries to impose by State-measures on adult labourers . . . " Likewise, "the shortening of the working-day . . . in the second half of the 19th century, has here and there been effected by the State to prevent the coining of children's blood into capital."[30] The legislative act of shortening of the working-day also has much to do with the intricacy of class relations, which we shall address later in text.

Historically, the state, even in the absence of the exclusive political sway of the bourgeoisie, thus served the interest of capital and its development or, as Marx states in a different context, prepared the class rule of the bourgeoisie. This fate of the state that delivered it to the bourgeoisie,

which befell upon it partly through its own doings, began very visibly after the Stuarts, and continued into the Restoration and beyond, when

> the landed proprietors carried, by legal means, an act of usurpation, effected everywhere on the Continent without any legal formality. They abolished the feudal tenure of land, *i.e.,* they got rid of all its obligations to the State, "indemnified" the State by taxes on the peasantry and the rest of the mass of the people, vindicated for themselves the rights of modern private property in estates to which they had only a feudal title, and, finally, passed those laws of settlement, which, *mutatis mutandis,* had the same effect on the English agricultural labourer, as the edict of the Tartar Boris Godunof on the Russian peasantry.

The Glorious Revolution brought into power, along with William of Orange, the landlord and capitalist appropriators of surplus value.[31]

In *The Communist Manifesto,* Marx and Engels make a parallel, but more general, observation of this development that made the political rise of the bourgeoisie possible:

> Each step in the development of the bourgeoisie was accompanied by a corresponding political advance of that class. An oppressed class under the sway of the feudal nobility, an armed and self-governing association in the medieval commune: here independent urban republic (as in Italy and Germany); there taxable "third estate" of the monarchy (as in France); afterwards, in the period of manufacturing proper, serving either the semi-feudal or the absolute monarchy as a counterpoise against the nobility, and, in fact, cornerstone of the great monarchies in general, the bourgeoisie has at last, since the establishment of Modern Industry and of the world market, conquered for itself, in the modern representative State, exclusive political sway. The executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie.[32]

The "executive of the modern state" manages the "common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie" *only* under such state of affairs in which the capitalist economic system (industry and commerce), and therefore also the bourgeoisie as a national force, have more fully developed. It follows that the modern state becomes a proper bourgeois state only with the more concrete development of capitalism and the bourgeoisie, to which the state itself has historically contributed. As Marx states clearly elsewhere, "The more advanced this society is . . . the further the bourgeoisie has advanced politically in a country and therefore the more state power has assumed a bourgeois character . . . "[33] This point must be kept in mind every time we attribute to Marx a class-tool theory of the state in bourgeois society.

We must also bear in mind that these formulations are consistent with Marx's explanation of the Bonapartist, independent state. The latter represents the underdevelopment and political impotency of the bourgeoisie, whereas the so-called tool state represents its development and political supremacy.

6.5 The Autonomy of the Tool State

This class-tool theory of the state should not be treated unthoughtfully. The passage in *The Communist Manifesto* is a simple, provocative statement. I am not sure why countless scholars think the sentence "The executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie" counts as a sufficient theory of the state. The strongest evidence for the rigid class-tool theory of the state in the sentence is the word "but." Elster suggests it "expresses the reductionist conception of the state that Marx held before 1850."[34] As discussed earlier in text, Marx held the independence, or nonreductionist, theory of the state in his critique of Hegel and later in *The German Ideology,* both written before 1850. As for the word "but," Marx, as we shall discuss again, frequently uses it to highlight an aspect of the state ignored by the others, and not to reduce the state to a specific function. What is more interesting is that, in this sentence, the state is said to be a form of managing committee. Any committee that manages the common affairs of a diverse group, such as the bourgeoisie, is necessarily autonomous. Marx does not explicitly make this point here. His discussions of the state elsewhere clearly assume it.

As *The German Ideology* points out, the interests of the bourgeoisie take "a general form" in the state. Thus, the state represents the "mean average interest" of this class. This means that the interests of the individual members of the bourgeoisie and the whole class are not harmonious. Thus, "Since the State is the form in which the individuals of a ruling class assert their common interests, and in which the whole civil society of an epoch is epitomised, it follows that the State mediates in the formation of all common institutions and that the institutions receive a political form."[35] It is precisely this mediating role that necessitates the autonomy and centralized political power of the state in general as a managing committee, even in a developed bourgeois society.

The instrumentality of the state in managing and even serving the interests of the bourgeoisie, then, does not eliminate the autonomous mediating role the state plays in bourgeois society. The best example of this scenario, according to Marx, is the United States. Unlike France, and especially Germany, here, as he notes, "the bourgeois society is not

developing on the basis of feudalism but in which it has originated from itself . . . the State, in contradistinction from all earlier national forms, was from the start subordinated to bourgeois society, to its production, and could never make the claim of being an end in itself."[36] Nevertheless, even "in North America . . . the power of the central government grows with the centralisation of capital."[37] In other words, the centralization of capital and the growth and centralization of political power were simultaneous processes, and not a zero-sum relationship in which the growth of capital obliterated the power and the relative autonomy of the state.

North America comes up also in Marx's discussion in *The German Ideology* as the "most perfect" modern, bourgeois state. The issue directly discussed here is the protection of private property by the state, which is the chief way in which it manages and sustains the common bourgeois interests. Marx begins by pointing out that "Through the emancipation of private property from the community, the State has become a separate entity, beside and outside civil society . . . "[38] This separation is also responsible for the autonomy of the state. For this reason, such a state is "the form of organisation which the bourgeois necessarily adopt both for internal and external purposes, for the mutual guarantee of their property and interests The most perfect example of the modern State is North America."[39]

In order to protect the "mutual" interests and the property of the bourgeoisie, the state must be separated from society. In order for the bourgeois form of property and therefore the corresponding bourgeois interests to become possible, property must be emancipated from the community of labor and the state. The emancipation of private property, however, requires the return of the state into property relations as an autonomous political instrument, thus generating an internal and reciprocal relationship between the two spheres. This is precisely what Marx has in mind, in *Capital,* when he says that the "separation of property from labour has become the necessary consequence of a law that apparently originated in their identity."[40] Thus, managing the "common affairs" or "average interests" of the bourgeoisie, becoming an instrument of capitalist development, and protecting private property all necessitate the autonomy of the state and its relative separation from the society.

While Marx often speaks of the state's autonomous relationship to society as the relationship of two conceptually separate spheres, this relationship is not to be seen merely as an external relationship. As Poulantzas well explains,

> the separateness of the state from society cannot be merely an external relation, inscribed in a topological image of exteriority, according to which

> the State, as an instance always external to the economy, now intervenes in the relations of production themselves thereby penetrating economic space, and now remains outside that space acting only on its periphery, The position of the State vis-à-vis the economy is never anything but the modality of the State's presence in the constitution and reproduction of the relations of production.[41]

For this reason, the relations of production are politico-legal in their internal relation, as well as in the various spheres of their reproduction. The reverse is also true: it is "precisely because politico-ideological relations are already present in the actual constitution of the relations of production that they play such an essential role in their reproduction; that is also why the process of production and exploitation involves the reproduction of the relations of politico-ideological domination and subordination."[42]

Thus, the autonomy of the state, as Poulantzas insists, is always relative. The relativity of the state's autonomy is not merely a quantitative relativity assumed by the external-relations explanations of the state's interaction with society. The state is also relationally relatively autonomous in the sense that its essence—the social relations of the bourgeois society—makes its autonomy inherently (internally) dependent upon the sphere on which it acts.

6.6 The Relative Autonomy of the State and the Fragmentation of Society

In order to further understand Marx's theory of relative autonomy of the state, even when the state is under the "exclusive political sway" of the bourgeoisie, we must further examine the anatomy of the society the state internalizes and epitomizes. This society is precisely the alienated, fragmented society we have discussed in the previous chapters.

This fragmentation simultaneously operates at different levels of generality, ranging from isolated individuals to classes and various mid-level formations in between. The bourgeois society, then, is a conglomerate of these various levels of fragmentation, which the state must politically and autonomously mediate. We shall address the relevance of the individual level in the next section. In this section, we will consider the division of classes into various factions and show that, for Marx, the autonomy of the state also varies, and is relative to the political power of each class, and the factions therein, *vis-a-vis* the other classes and factions in society.

Though the following passage from *The German Ideology* considers the transition from feudalism to capitalism in Germany, it offers the basis of a general theory of the relative autonomy of the state: "The impotence of

each separate sphere of life . . . did not allow any one of them to gain exclusive domination."[43] It follows that the complete independence of the state "is only found nowadays in those countries . . . in which no one section of the population can achieve dominance over the others."[44] Stated from the opposite angle, when one section of the population achieves decisive dominance over the others, the independence of the state coalesces with the interests of the ruling section.

However, even when the bourgeoisie gains "exclusive domination," it is still fragmented into factional interests. Marx and Engels, in a review of Emile de Girardin's *Le socialisme et l'impôt,* written in 1850, make the following revealing comment: "The bourgeois state is nothing more than the mutual insurance of the bourgeois class against its individual members, as well as the exploited class, insurance which will necessarily become increasingly expensive and to all appearances increasingly independent of bourgeois society."[45] The expression, "nothing more than . . . " should not be taken literally.[46] The point is that the statement "common affairs of the bourgeoisie," mentioned in *The Communist Manifesto,* finds further clarification here. These affairs include the conflict among the "individual members" of the bourgeoisie and between this class and the proletariat. Even though the reasoning for it is not provided here, it is explicitly stated that the "insurance" role the state plays in antagonistic bourgeois society requires it to appear "increasingly independent of bourgeois society."

When Marx studies specific political circumstances, as opposed to his more general abstractions regarding the political rule of the bourgeoisie, he often takes into account the antagonistic relations among the various factions of the bourgeoisie. This point comes across very clearly and explicitly in his *The Class Struggles in France.* The main text of this work begins with the following statement: "After the July Revolution, when the liberal banker Laffitte led his *compére,* the Duke of Orleans, in triumph to the *Hôtel de Ville,* he let fall the words: '*From now on the bankers will rule.*' " With this statement, Laffitte revealed the "secret" of this revolution, at least partially. The secret, according to Marx, is that "it was not the French bourgeoisie that ruled under Louis Philippe, but *one faction* of it: bankers . . . the so-called *finance aristocracy,*" which consisted of the ruling bloc of the "stock-exchange kings, railway kings, owners of coal and iron mines and forests, a part of the landed-proprietors associated with them." As for the official opposition to this rule, a significant part of it came from the "*industrial bourgeoisie* proper."[47]

When dealing with the particular historical situations, then, Marx often acknowledges the specificity of the ruling bloc (cf. Poulantzas) in power. As also seen earlier, for instance, it was the "landed proprietors" under the Stuarts and "the landlord and capitalist appropriators

of surplus-value" who dominated during the Restoration.[48] We have just found out about the rise of "*finance aristocracy*" in another context.

The development of the bourgeoisie into a class (a national force for itself) is linked to the development of private property in its capitalistic form. With this development comes the emancipation of property from the state.[49] Marx often asserts that the finance bourgeoisie, in opposition to the rest of the society, obtains exclusive political sway in the state because of this separation, since the state becomes dispossessed. The state is thus,

> purchased gradually by the owners of property by means of taxation, [and it] has fallen entirely into their hands through the national debt, and its existence has become wholly dependent on the commercial credit which the owners of property, the bourgeois, extend to it, as reflected in the rise and fall of State funds on the stock exchange.[50]

This point reoccurs in Marx's writings. For instance, Marx explains in *The Class Struggles in France* that "financial aristocracy" in the ruling faction used the national debt for its own purposes in the aftermath of the July Revolution. We must quote his timely comment at great length:

> Owing to its financial straits, the July Monarchy was dependent from the beginning on the big bourgeoisie, and its dependence on the big bourgeoisie was the inexhaustible source of increasing financial straits. It was impossible to subordinate the administration of the state to the interests of national production without balancing the budget, without establishing a balance between state expenditures and revenues. And how was this balance to be established without limiting state expenditures, that is, without encroaching on interests which were so many props of the ruling system, and without redistributing taxes, that is, without shifting a considerable share of the burden of taxation onto the shoulders of the big bourgeoisie itself?
>
> On the contrary, the faction of the bourgeoisie that ruled and legislated through the Chambers had a *direct interest* in the *indebtedness of the state.* The *state deficit* was really the main object of its speculation and the chief source of its enrichment. "At the end of each year a new deficit. After the lapse of four or five years a new loan." And every new loan offered new opportunities to the finance aristocracy for defrauding the state, which was kept artificially on the verge of bankruptcy—it had to negotiate with the bankers under the most unfavorable conditions. Each new loan gave a further opportunity, that of plundering the public that invested its capital in state bonds by means of stock-exchange manipulations, the secrets of

> which the government and the majority in the Chambers were privy to. In general, the instability of state credit and the possession of state secrets gave the bankers and their associates in the Chambers and on the throne the possibility of evoking sudden, extraordinary fluctuations in the quotations of government securities, the result of which was always bound to be the ruin of a mass of smaller capitalists and the fabulously rapid enrichment of the big gamblers. As the state deficit was in the direct interest of the ruling faction of the bourgeoisie, it is clear why the extraordinary state expenditure in the last years of Louis Philippe's reign was far more than double the *extraordinary* state expenditure under Napoleon. The enormous sums, which in this way flowed through the hands of the state facilitated, moreover, swindling contracts for deliveries, bribery, defalcations, and all kinds of roguery.[51]

The general points of this passage are obvious enough: (a) the state becomes financially dependent through the development of bourgeois property and (b) this dependence allows the financial capital to swindle the whole society. We are, however, interested here in a third point that also comes across: (c) this swindling contradicts the interests of other sectors of the society, including the petty and industrial capital.

A more general theory of the antagonistic bourgeois society is briefly offered in *Capital,* Vol. 3. This volume tellingly ends, unfinished, with a brief introduction to the question: "What constitutes a class?" Marx answers: "wage-labourers, capitalists and landlords constitute the three great social classes." This "stratification" is explained as follows before Marx arrives at this conclusion:

> We have seen that the continual tendency and law of development of the capitalist mode of production is more and more to divorce the means of production from labour, and more and more to concentrate the scattered means of production into large groups, thereby transforming labour into wage-labour and the means of production into capital. And to this tendency, on the other hand, corresponds the independent separation of landed property from capital and labour, or the transformation of all landed property into the form of landed property corresponding to the capitalist mode of production.[52]

This statement is supplemented with the acknowledgment "of the infinite fragmentation of interest and rank into which the division of social labour splits labourers as well as capitalists and landlords . . . "[53] Without completing Marx's unfinished thought here, we can safely assume that the division of social labor "splits" the three great classes into further "infinite fragmentation of interest."

These fragments, be it in the form of classes or their more specific offshoots, play a significant part in the struggles for political power. The fragmentation of the bourgeoisie, owing to the division of labor in production and "free competition" in the market, "brings out the inherent laws of capitalist production in the shape of external coercive laws having power over every individual capitalist."[54] As Marx says in *Capital,* Vol. 3, "regulation and order are themselves indispensable elements of any mode of production, if it is to assume social stability and independence from mere chance and arbitrariness. These are precisely the form of its social stability and therefore its relative freedom from mere arbitrariness and mere chance."[55]

In other words, the politically relevant conflict in bourgeois society is not reduced to the conflict between the workers and the capitalists. In such a society, the capitalists hold direct authority over the workers through economic (see Chapter 4) and politico-juridical means (see Chapter 5). However, "among the bearers of this authority, the capitalists themselves, who confront one another only as commodity-owners, there reigns complete anarchy within which the social interrelations of production assert themselves only as an overwhelming natural law in relation to individual free will."[56] This anarchy entails some sense of irrationality, instead of a "truly rational organization," and is a necessary precondition of capitalism. In other words, capitalism as a mode of production must have an overarching "rational" law organizing it on the basis of its own logic, while simultaneously maintaining an irrational anarchic system in the market.[57] This can be established only by the modern, centralized state. In a sense, the state protects capitalism from the capitalists.

In another sense, the state in bourgeois society ultimately reinforces the domination of the working class by the bourgeoisie. However, Marx's treatment of this issue is more complex than it is often assumed. His analysis of the duration of the working day in *Capital,* Vol. 1, reveals this complexity. For instance, to the question, what accounts for the "normal" working day?, Marx answers, "The establishment of a normal working-day is the result of centuries of struggle between capitalist and labourer." As a general rule, " . . . capital is reckless of the health or length of life of the labourer, unless under compulsion from society."[58] The ability of the working class to assert itself politically is an important aspect of the legislation determining the length of the working day. Hence, the bourgeois state may internalize the wishes not only of the bourgeoisie but also of the proletariat, since, at some level, it assumes the task of representing the general interests.

In this context, Marx observes that the shortening of the working-day is not necessarily merely a result of the working class struggles, but also

the competition among different factions of the bourgeoisie. In a footnote to these comments, he says,

> We, therefore, find, e.g., that in the beginning of 1863, 26 firms owning extensive potteries in Staffordshire, amongst others, Josiah Wedgwood, & Sons, petition in a memorial for "some legislative enactment." Competition with other capitalists permits them no voluntary limitation of working-time for children, &c. "Much as we deplore the evils before mentioned, it would not be possible to prevent them by any scheme of agreement between the manufacturers . . . Taking all these points into consideration, we have come to the conviction that some legislative enactment is wanted." ("Children's Employment Comm." Rep. I, 1863, p. 322.) Most recently a much more striking example offers. The rise in the price of cotton during a period of feverish activity, had induced the manufacturers in Blackburn to shorten, by mutual consent, the working-time in their mills during a certain fixed period. This period terminated about the end of November, 1871. Meanwhile, the wealthier manufacturers, who combined spinning with weaving, used the diminution of production resulting from this agreement, to extend their own business and thus to make great profits at the expense of the small employers. The latter thereupon turned in their extremity to the operatives, urged them earnestly to agitate for the 9 hours system, and promised contributions in money to this end.[59]

Interestingly, after telling us the length of the working-day is determined by the struggle between the working class and the bourgeoisie, Marx points out that the struggle for the reduction of the working-day received the support of some capitalists, due to competition among them. This signals the political importance of the divisions within the bourgeoisie and the unlikely alliances that may be formed between the groups in different classes.

The Communist Manifesto sums up this point well: The proletariat "compels legislative recognition of particular interests of the workers, by taking advantage of the divisions among the bourgeoisie itself. Thus, the ten-hours' bill in England was carried." This is not to say that the proletarian interests are always harmonious, as some assume: "This organisation of the proletarians into a class, and consequently into a political party, is continually being upset again and again by the competition between the workers themselves."[60]

In short, as a general principle, "political power is precisely the official expression of antagonism in civil society."[61] The antagonisms prevailing in bourgeoisie society are complex, operating in different spheres of life and producing the need for the autonomous power of the state. This complexity, at a different level of abstraction, also assumes a society that

is fragmented into individuals, for, as discussed in the previous chapters, the capitalist mode of production also produces, to use one of Marx's favorite quotations from Hobbes, "*bellum omnium contra omnes.*" This abstraction gives Marx a different, more philosophical vantage point to examine the modern, bourgeois state, without which our understanding of his theory of the state and its autonomy would remain fundamentally incomplete.

6.7 Alienation and the State

Marx's alienation theory of the state has received, rather dismissively, much less attention than the class theory of the state. Yet the alienation theory of the state is essential for a more comprehensive understanding of Marx's theory of the state. On the whole, as Paul Thomas rightly observes, the alien-state theory developed in *On the Jewish Question* significantly informs Marx's later formulations.[62] It captures the relationship of antagonistic, fragmented bourgeois society from a different vantage point, that of social alienation of isolated individuals. While the conclusions of the alienation theory and the class theory of the state are generally the same, the former adds a more philosophical dimension to Marx's theory of the state, emphasizing, beyond contradictory interests, the relationship between the general absence of freedom in bourgeois society and the limitations of political emancipation through the state. What follows simultaneously emphasizes this point and demonstrates the continuity between the alienation theory and class theory of the state.

In *On the Jewish Question,* the bourgeois ("modern," "free") state is said to be an illusory, abstract community with abstract universalism and freedom. In the modern state, and in particular the so-called free-state,

> man frees himself through the *medium of the state,* . . . he frees himself *politically* from a limitation when, in contradiction with himself, he raises himself above this limitation in an *abstract, limited,* and partial way. It follows further that, by freeing himself *politically,* man frees himself in a *roundabout way,* through an *intermediary,* although an *essential intermediary* . . . The state is the intermediary between man and man's freedom. Just as Christ is the intermediary to whom man transfers the burden of all his divinity, all his *religious constraint,* so the state is the intermediary to whom man transfers all his non-divinity and all his *human unconstraint.*[63]

This is because, due to various forms of alienation discussed in the previous two chapters, humans are not free in society. Therefore,

> The state abolishes, in its own way, distinctions of birth, social rank, education, occupation, when it declares that birth, social rank, education, occupation, are non-political distinctions, when it proclaims, without regard to these distinctions, that every member of the nation is an *equal* participant in national sovereignty, when it treats all elements of the real life of the nation from the standpoint of the state.

It follows that, from the standpoint of the state, that is, the formal legal standpoint of individual rights, individuals are free and equal participants in, and members of, the sovereign.

Marx calls this form of freedom "abstract freedom." The fact that the state abolishes antagonisms and distinctions in society "in its own way" means precisely that it maintains such antagonisms and nonfreedom in society by giving them abstract expression of harmony and freedom within itself. That is to say,

> the state allows private property, education, occupation, to *act* in *their* way, *i.e.*, as private property, as education, as occupation, and to exert the influence of their *special* nature. Far from abolishing these real distinctions, the state only exists on the presupposition of their existence; it feels itself to be a political state and asserts its universality only in opposition to these elements of its being.

Thus, "Only in this way, *above* the *particular* elements, does the state constitute itself as universality"[64] and by its virtue of being "above the particular elements" of society as an autonomous entity. In the meanwhile,

> All the preconditions of this egoistic life continue to exist in *civil society outside* the sphere of the state, but as qualities of civil society. Where the political state has attained its true development, man—not only in thought, in consciousness, but in reality, in life – leads a twofold life, a heavenly and an earthly life: life in the political community, in which he considers himself a communal being, and life in civil society, in which he acts as a private individual, regards other men as a means, degrades himself into a means, and becomes the plaything of alien powers . . . In the state, . . . where man is regarded as a species-being, he is the imaginary member of an illusory sovereignty, is deprived of his real individual life and endowed with an unreal universality.

Because individuals live in "civil society" (the bourgeois society), within "the sphere of egoism, of *bellum omnium contra omnes,*" the state "has become the expression of man's *separation* from his *community,* from himself and from other men."[65] This "expression of man's *separation* from his

community" is precisely the basis of the separation of the state from society, which is simultaneously the separation ("emancipation") of private property from the state.

We do not in this work get a detailed explanation of why bourgeois society has become the realm of alienation of individuals from each other. This was worked out in Marx's *Manuscripts of 1844* in greater detail and applied to his mature works later, as we have discussed in Chapter 4. The "social alienation," as we called it in that chapter, which is internally related to other forms of alienation, comes to characterize the essence of the "free-state," described in *On the Jewish Question,* which,

> is Christian since in it man, not merely one man but everyman, ranks as *sovereign,* as the highest being, but it is man in his uncivilized, unsocial form, man in his fortuitous existence, man just as he is, man as he has been corrupted by the whole organization of our society, who has lost himself, been alienated, and handed over to the rule of inhuman conditions and elements—in short, man who is not yet a *real* species-being.[66]

On the Jewish Question was published in the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher* against Bruno Bauer. Marx continues the same polemic against Bauer in *The Holy Family*:

> In the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher* it was demonstrated to Herr Bauer that this "free humanity" and the "recognition" of it are nothing but the recognition of the *egoistic civil individual* and of the *unrestrained* movement of the spiritual and material elements which are the content of his life situation, the content of *present-day* civil life; that the *rights of man* do not, therefore, free man from religion, but give him freedom of religion; that they do not free him from property, but procure for him *freedom of property*; that they do not free him from the filth of gain, but rather give him *freedom of gainful occupation*.

Thus, the essence of the present-day state, insofar as it is a bourgeois state granting the "rights of man," can be found in the antagonistic, alien relations in the individuals' "life situation," which is based on a form of slavery:

> It was shown [to Bauer] that the *recognition of the rights of man* by the *modern state* has no other meaning than the *recognition of slavery* by the *state of antiquity* had. In other words, just as the ancient state had slavery as its *natural basis*, the *modern state* has as its *natural basis* civil society and the *man* of civil society, i.e., the independent man linked with other men only by the ties of private interest and *unconscious* natural necessity, the

> *slave* of labour for gain and of his own as well as other men's *selfish* need. The modern state has recognised this as its natural basis as such in the *universal rights of man*. It did not create it. As it was the product of civil society driven beyond the old political bonds by its own development, the modern state, for its part, now recognised the womb from which it sprang and its basis by the *declaration* of the *rights of man*.[67]

The "slavery" in bourgeois state is identified with competition and selfishness in the preceding quote, and also with the domination of labor by the capitalist in the other parts of the same text. Thus, the term "slavery" captures both the alienation of a person from other people, expressed in the antagonistic relationship between capital and labor, and the alienation of humans from their species-being, expressed as egotism. In brief, the modern state "is based on *emancipated slavery*, *bourgeois society* . . . the society of industry, of universal competition, of private interest freely following its aims, of anarchy, of the self-estranged natural and spiritual individuality."[68]

What is also especially revealing about *The Holy Family* is that it provides a bridge between the theory of alienation and the relevance of class antagonism to the state and its autonomy. Indeed, the third section of Chapter 6, "Critical Battle Against the French Revolution," which comes shortly after the preceding comments, provides an analysis of the state that uses the same theory and language Marx employed in *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* and in *The Civil War in France*:

> *Napoleon* represented the last battle of *revolutionary terror* against the *bourgeois society* which had been proclaimed by this same Revolution, and against its policy. Napoleon, of course, already discerned the essence of the *modern state*; he understood that it is based on the unhampered development of bourgeois society, on the free movement of private interest, etc. He decided to recognise and protect this basis. He was no terrorist with his head in the clouds.

However, this dependence of the state on antagonistic bourgeois society did not prevent Napoleon from regarding "the *state* as an *end in itself* and civil life only as a treasurer and his *subordinate* which must have no *will of its own*." In this, he "showed no more consideration for [the bourgeois] essential *material* interests, trade and industry, whenever they conflicted with his political interests." The measures Napoleon took in order to treat the state "as an end in itself" put him against bourgeoisie society, the state against the bourgeoisie, which culminated into the victory of the bourgeoisie by1830.[69]

With these comments, the conclusion we arrive at is threefold: the modern state is determined by alienated relations; this does not mean that the state cannot pursue its own ends; and *The Holy Family* stands as evidence that the theory of the state expressed in *On the Jewish Question* and in Marx's later writings is the same. *The German Ideology* also explicitly continues these thoughts by linking atomized, alienated civil society with the capitalistic division of labor:

> . . . the division of labour . . . implies the contradiction between the interest of the separate individual or the individual family and the common interest of all individuals who have intercourse with one another. And indeed, this common interest does not exist merely in the imagination, as the "general interest," but first of all in reality, as the mutual interdependence of the individuals among whom the labour is divided . . .
>
> And finally, the division of labour offers us the first example of the fact that, as long as man remains in naturally evolved society, that is, as long as a cleavage exists between the particular and the common interest, as long, therefore, as activity is not voluntarily, but naturally, divided, man's own deed becomes an alien power opposed to him, which enslaves him instead of being controlled by him. For as soon as the division of labour comes into being, each man has a particular, exclusive sphere of activity, which is forced upon him and from which he cannot escape. He is a hunter, a fisherman, a herdsman, or a critical critic, and must remain so if he does not want to lose his means of livelihood; while in communist society, where nobody has one exclusive sphere of activity but each can become accomplished in any branch he wishes, society regulates the general production and thus makes it possible for me to do one thing today and another tomorrow, to hunt in the morning, fish in the afternoon, rear cattle in the evening, criticise after dinner, just as I have a mind, without ever becoming hunter, fisherman, herdsman or critic.
>
> This fixation of social activity, this consolidation of what we ourselves produce into an objective power above us, growing out of our control, thwarting our expectations, bringing to naught our calculations, is one of the chief factors in historical development up till now.[70]

What is the relationship of alienation, induced by the division of labor, to the state? Marx explains in a marginal note attached to these comments:

> Out of this very contradiction between the particular and the common interests, the common interest assumes an independent form as the *state*, which is divorced from the real individual and collective interests, and at the same time as an illusory community, always based, however, on the real ties existing in every family and tribal conglomeration—such as flesh and

> blood, language, division of labour on a larger scale, and other interests—and especially, as we shall show later, on the classes, already implied by the division of labour, which in every such mass of men separate out, and one of which dominates all the others. It follows from this that all struggles within the state, the struggle between democracy, aristocracy, and monarchy, the struggle for the franchise, etc., etc., are merely the illusory forms—altogether the general interest is the illusory form of common interests—in which the real struggles of the different classes are fought out among one another (of this the German theoreticians have not the faintest inkling, although they have received a sufficient initiation into the subject in the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher* and *Die heilige Familie*).[71]

Before we let Marx continue with his explanation, we must emphasize two important points. First, as argued in the earlier sections, the claims that the state is independent and also "merely the illusory forms in which the real struggles of the different classes are fought out among one another" are but different aspects of the same state theory. Second, the class theory of the state expressed here is consistent with the theory of alien state expressed in *On the Jewish Question* (published in *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher*) and *The Holy Family* (*Die heilige Familie*), which gave the "German theoreticians . . . sufficient initiation . . . " These two points come across equally forcefully and concomitantly in the following passage:

> Further, it follows that every class which is aiming at domination, even when its domination, as is the case with the proletariat, leads to the abolition of the old form of society in its entirety and of domination in general, must first conquer political power in order to represent its interest in turn as the general interest, which in the first moment it is forced to do.
>
> Just because individuals seek *only* their particular interest, which for them does not coincide with their common interest, the latter is asserted as an interest "alien" to them, and "independent" of them, as in its turn a particular and distinctive "general" interest, or they themselves must remain within this discord, as in democracy. On the other hand, too, the *practical* struggle of these particular interests, which *actually* constantly run counter to the common and illusory common interests, necessitates *practical* intervention and restraint through the illusory "general" interest in the form of the state.[72]

What we find here again is that the class and alienation theories of the state are internally related facets of the same state theory. We must also not pass the opportunity to point out that this passage comes from a section of *The German Ideology,* which discusses the the essence of the materialist

conception of history. The alienation theory, thus, properly belongs to the "materialist conception of history." Alienation of humans is the "essence" of this conception, though only insofar as it applies to bourgeois society.

If the class and alienation theories of the state are but the same theory of the state expressed differently, and if the dependence of the state on antagonistic social relations is the same as its independence from society, which comes with necessary "practical intervention and control" of society, then, why does Marx also say the independence of the state is illusory?

Clearly, Marx thinks that the real independence of the state and its illusory independence are related. The mediating role the state plays in epitomizing the fragmented, alienated civil society also makes possible "the illusion that law is based on the will, and indeed on the will divorced from its real basis—on free will. Similarly, justice is in its turn reduced to the actual laws."[73] In reality, "Civil law develops simultaneously with private property out of the disintegration of the natural community."[74] Thus, the alienating conditions that necessitate the real independence of the state also produce the fetishistic, illusory view that the law has no basis in society; that is, it is on the basis of law and justice that society is founded by the state. As Marx succinctly expresses this view elsewhere,

> society is not founded upon the law; that is a legal fiction. On the contrary, the law must be founded upon society, it must express the common interests and needs of society . . . which arise from the material mode of production prevailing at the given time. [The] *Code Napoléon* . . . has not created modern bourgeois society. On the contrary, bourgeois society . . . finds its legal expression in this Code.[75]

With the last remark from an earlier writing, we have arrived at Marx's general theory of historical materialism, which expresses the relationship between the structure and superstructure of society (Chapter 3). The essence of this relationship is the relations of production, captured vividly with the theory of alienation (Chapter 4). The will of the state, that is, its legal expression, is internally related to the alienated society whose common interests (defined by the given mode of production) it must represent (Chapter 5).

6.8 Conclusion

Marx's theory of the state is far more complex than the simple tool-state theory too often attributed to him. On the whole, Marx's general theory of the modern state treats the state as a dialectical moment of the

alienated, fragmented social whole. Its relative autonomy stems from the fragmented anatomy of the bourgeois society in various ways, as explained earlier. At the same time, the state's autonomous position makes possible the development of distinctive bureaucratic interest, however much these interests must also be embedded in society. Lastly, we have seen that the Marxian class theory of the state and the alienation theory of the state follow the same logic. It can be said that the former is a subtheory of the latter, which allows Marx to see the state-society relationship from a broader vantage point that goes beyond class relations to include the relations of the atomized individuals. But class relations themselves are precisely the relations of alienated individuals in the final analysis.

Epilogue: Missing Parts of the Organic Whole

I have tried in this book to account for Marx's philosophical system, which is an attempt to capture human totality in its past, present, and future. Marx's philosophical system perceives this totality as a historical process in which different social wholes develop out of the preceding ones. Each social whole is a specific "mode of production." All modes of production share the same general characteristics, emanating from humans' species-specific interchange with nature.

We have discussed that Marx articulates "man and Nature" as more specific determinations, such as production, division of labor, social relations, forces and products of production, etc. These parts generally constitute the structure of each society, to which corresponds a superstructure. The superstructure consists of the ideas, laws, culture, and politics of societies. Viewed from this angle, each social whole consists of a structure and a superstructure, which are said to be in a dialectical relationship with each other.

Dialectic is not simply Marx's method of comprehension. It is also, as Marx sees it, the modus operandi of the social whole. According to this dialectic view, the social whole is a system with internally related parts. It is

> . . . not a mere arithmetical sum of separate and distinct parts but a configuration of interdependent elements. There is a total functional integration in which each element is what it is because of its relations to the other elements and to the whole. Each entails and is entailed in the other elements.[1]

Without these considerations, as Rader warns us, we risk relegating Marx's thought to the ranks of mechanistic reductionism, a form of thought that explains the relations of different parts externally and reduces some parts to mere epiphenomena of some other primary phenomena.[2]

The social whole, in Marx's rendition of it, is also organic. It is not a static system, since inter- and inner relations of its parts are also processes. Process is an essential aspect of the social whole, and it makes the system organic. The term "organic" in this context, then, refers to a living organism. This is why Marx at times calls the social whole the "living" whole. If the organic whole is essentially a

process, then, something or someone must set it in motion. It must have a subject. In Marx's materialist conception of it, the human life processes make society a living organism. Society, in other words, is the totality of human life processes at any given time, and thus, of human nature as essence and existence. It is a live process, and a process of life, in which humans socially interact with, modify, and appropriate nature and one another through praxis. Marxian dialectic, I venture to say, is nothing without human activity, that is, without the social life processes. For this reason, the social whole is not only various internally related parts, but also a form of objective activity.

Depending on the specific mode of productive, objective activity—and the specific mode of social relations humans enter into as a consequence—the social whole takes a historically definite form. The bourgeois society is one such form, characterized by the alienation of activity and social relations. The theory of alienation, as I have insisted throughout this book, explains why there is a historically specific bourgeois society and historically specific parts and processes in it.

Due to the importance it attributes to Marx's theory of alienation, perhaps, the title of this book should have been *Dialectics of Human Alienation in Marx's Philosophy.* However, such a title would have been somewhat inappropriate. The reasons for this are significant. First, if we take alienation as the primary standpoint of Marx's philosophy, then we would have difficulty understanding why there is alienation in the first place. Alienation, as Marx emphasizes, is a historically specific process in which human-life process in general unfolds in bourgeois society. Without the concept of human essence, we would wound up assuming what needs to be explained in the first place. Second, and relatedly, the theory of alienation of itself cannot explain why the current society is a historically specific, particular social whole, while simultaneously it is also a general mode of human existence. The theory of human nature in general provides a remedy for these problems. Third, and very significantly, without the theory of human nature in general as a contrasting standpoint, the theory of alienation would be reduced to a noncritical theory. This contrast allows Marx to characterize various aspects of bourgeois society as various processes and relations of dehumanization. It also allows Marx to argue that the superstructure is an inverted form of alienated structure and, as an inversion, abstractly mimics what human essence actually needs (self-realization through free activity in and through a community.) These are the main reasons why, as I have insisted, human nature is the primary standpoint of Marx's thought.

The Marxian explanation of the bourgeois society I have offered throughout this book focuses on the internalizing processes in which different moments are structured together into a concrete whole. However, Marx's theory of alienation suggests the development of a fundamental contradiction in this society, which may be very broadly called the contradiction between human essence and existence. Explaining why this contradiction is a fundamental contradiction, indeed the one that ultimately explains various other important contradictions of capitalism, falls beyond the physical scope of this book. Nevertheless, we must note here that contradiction is a fundamental dialectical relation. Without the theory

of contradiction, this social whole and the internal relations of its parts cannot be understood on their own terms or in terms of why this mode of production, according to Marx, is transitory.

Regarding the bourgeois society, Marx repeatedly tells us that contradiction characterizes every socially determined aspect of this system. In this form of determination, different moments "determine each other internally and search for each other externally . . . The necessary inner connection of moments belonging together and their mutually indifferent, independent existence are already a foundation of contradictions." The contradictions between various moments, thus, have to be "grasped more intrinsically than merely as the mutual indifferent appearance of the individual moments of the process or, rather, of the totality of processes."[3]

As Ollman further explains,

> Contradiction is understood here as the incompatible development of different elements within the same relation, which is to say between elements that are also dependent on one another. What is remarked as differences are based . . . on certain conditions, and these conditions are constantly changing. Hence, differences are changing; and given how each difference serves as part of the appearance and/or functioning of others, grasped as relations, how one changes affects all. Consequently, their paths of development do not only intersect in mutually supportive ways, but are constantly blocking, undermining, otherwise interfering with and in due course transforming one another.[4]

If so,

> Contradiction offers the optimal means for bringing such change and interaction as regards both present and future into a single focus. The future finds its way into this focus as the likely and possible outcomes of the interaction of these opposing tendencies in the present, as their real potential. It is contradiction more than any other notion that enables Marx to avoid stasis and one-sidedness in thinking about the organic and historical movements of the capitalist mode of production, about how they affect each other and develop together from their origins in feudalism to whatever lies just over our horizon.[5]

A significant implication of Marx's theorization of contradictions in this way, we may add, is that the contradictory development of various internally related parts must reach a tipping point after which these parts can no longer be held together. Marx's theory of classes in capitalism is a very obvious example of this sort of contradictory development. The consideration of the fundamental contradictions of the bourgeois society leads Marx's dialectic straight to the theory of revolution. The possibility of revolution, then, is also an integral part of the contradictory, organic social whole called capitalism and must be

recognized as such if a fuller comprehension of Marx's formulation of this system is to be attained. Even though some partial explanation of it exists, revolution is a missing part of the social whole I have constructed on Marx's behalf in this book.

So is communism. Communism is a real potentiality of the present social whole. It represents the positive, revolutionary resolution of the contradictions inherent in capitalism, a resolution in which the positive side of capitalism is transformed into a qualitatively different organic whole. But communism as a potentiality is not simply the presence of the future within the present. Rather, it also brings into sharp focus a theoretical alternative with which capitalism is evaluated. Many of Marx's references to communism serve this purpose.

A famous and obvious example of this is the statement that communist society is "where nobody has one exclusive sphere of activity but each can become accomplished in any branch he wishes . . . " Clearly, Marx is sane enough to know that this "where" is not to be found anywhere in past and present actuality. It is, one the one hand, a potentiality inherent in the system. On the other, it is a way of criticizing, by contrast, capitalism *where* "as soon as the distribution of labour comes into being, each man has a particular, exclusive sphere of activity, which is forced upon him . . . "[6] This makes Marx's method of criticism unique. His standard of criticism emerges out of the present conditions he seeks to explain, whereas his opponents either refuse to criticize the existing state of affairs or criticize them on the basis of a completely utopian or imagined "idyllic" model. Some even plunge into the justification of the present system by contrasting the achievements of the present with the failings of the past.[7] The theory of future society brings a great degree of relief in this regard, since it criticizes capitalism on the basis of its own potentialities.

Every specific formulation of communism by Marx points toward the same conclusion. Communism is ultimately based on the resolution of the contradiction between human essence and existence in capitalism. In other words, the potentialities that are taken into account as fundamental are essentially those that point toward human emancipation and fuller self-realization, that is, toward overcoming alienation. Communism, then, is the would-be organic totality in which essence and existence become harmonious, in which humans are at home in their social relations and the nature they interact with, in which human activity is free and contributes to their and their community's development, and in which humans give on the basis of their abilities and receive on the basis of their needs without coming into structural conflict with other people. If communism is this alternative, then the most fundamental contradiction it seeks to resolve in a revolutionary way is the one between human essence and alienated existence in capitalism.

In brief, revolution and communism are important moments of Marx's philosophical system. They are largely missing from my presentation of his system, due to space limitations. It is my hope to further comment on Marx's theories of revolution and communism in a future work.

Notes

Preface

1. Marx uses the masculine nouns and pronouns, such as "man," "he," etc., to mean "human," "worker," and so on. Nothing other than this intention should be attributed to Marx or to the present author.
2. For a very useful discussion, see István Mészáros, *Marx's Theory of Alienation* (London: Merlin Press, 2005), 84–87. For a very popular opposing view, see Karl R. Popper, *The Open Society and Its Enemies: Hegel and Marx* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971). Popper, absurdly, goes so far as to find in Marx "dualism of body and mind," that is, a "practical dualism" in which the "flesh" is predominant. Ibid., 102–103.
3. It is often claimed that Marx had abandoned philosophy in his mature years. Karl Korsch, for instance, says: "Any thorough elucidation of the relationship between 'Marxism and philosophy' must start from the unambiguous statements of Marx and Engels themselves that a necessary result of their new dialectical-materialist standpoint was the suppression, not only of bourgeois idealist philosophy, but *simultaneously* of all philosophy *as such*." Karl Korsch, *Marxism and Philosophy* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1970), 49. Korsch goes on to suggest that "philosophy cannot be abolished without being realized . . . " It can only be abolished, in other words, with the abolition of the present society. For a similar view, in a book with the same title as Korsch's, which claims that Marx and Engels tried to " 'leap out' of philosophy into science," but "failed" to do so, see Alex Callinicos, *Marxism and Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), 154. Both works, however, provide useful discussions of the debates on the relationship of Marxism and philosophy.
4. This makes Marx's epistemology dependent on the ontological reality of human nature. Furthermore, and this is an important distinguishing characteristic of the present book, I argue that Marx's philosophical system is built upon this ontological reality, whose mode of operation is dialectical, and which must therefore be comprehended dialectically. It follows that the beginning and the end point of Marx's system is "man" and not dialectics per se. This is important to bear in mind since the Marxian dialectic is often presented as a goal in itself.

5. With this claim, this book declares the opposition between "critical" Marx and "scientific" Marx untenable, however much such an opposition may be valid for the various camps of Marxism. For a well-judged discussion, see Alvin W. Gouldner, *The Two Marxisms* (New York: Seabury Press, 1980), 32–62.

 Also, it should be noted that "standpoint" is not a reference to Marx's preferred beginning point in his method of presentation and analysis. He states explicitly that "my *analytic* method . . . does not proceed from *man* but from a given period of society . . ." Karl Marx, "Marginal Notes on Wagner's Lehrbuch der politischen Oekonomie" (New York: International Publishers, 1989), 24: 547.
6. Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844* (New York: International Publishers, 1975), 3: 303. This human natural science should not be equated with natural sciences. Marx is always concerned with "The *social* reality of nature," or with the nature of social reality. He tells us that the social reality of nature and "the *natural science of man* are identical terms." Ibid., 304. Elsewhere, Marx depicts his science as "the study of the actual life-process and the activity of individuals of each epoch." Human science, then, is "not devoid of premises." Its "premises are men . . . " and their active life process: "As soon as this active life-process is described, history ceases to be a collection of dead facts as it is with the empiricists (themselves still abstract), or an imagined activity of imagined subjects, as with the idealists." Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The German Ideology* (New York: International Publishers, 1976), 5: 37.

 For an excellent defense, and demonstration of this view, see Paul Thomas, *Marxism and Scientific Socialism: From Engels to Althusser* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 9–34. Also see Cyril Smith, *Marx at the Millennium* (London: Pluto Press, 1996), 109–152.
7. While a very common interpretation, popularized by Louis Althusser, holds that this theory was dismissed by Marx in his mature years along with the theory of human essence, others, such as Bertell Ollman and István Mészáros, and, very recently, Sean Sayers, have shown that the theory of alienation plays a significant part in all of Marx's theoretical works. Mészáros, *Marx's Theory of Alienation*; Bertell Ollman, *Alienation: Marx's Conception of Man in Capitalist Society,* 2nd Edition (London: Cambridge University Press, 1976); Sean Sayers, *Marx & Alienation: Essays on Hegelian Themes* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).
8. Mészáros, *Marx's Theory of Alienation,* 93.
9. Allen W. Wood holds the contrary view: "we should look on alienation in Marx's mature thought not as an explanatory concept but as descriptive or diagnostic one." Allen W. Wood, *Karl Marx,* 2nd Edition (New York: Routledge, 2004), 44.
10. For a useful, brief survey and critique of this sort of materialism, see Cyril Smith, *Marx at the Millennium,* 39–44.
11. In the tradition of analytical Marxism, which dismisses dialectic method, we may site two influential authors and works, among many: Jon Elster, *Making*

Sense of Marx (London: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 37–48. For a defense of Elster's dismissive view, see Erik Olin Wright, Andrew Levine, and Elliott Sober, *Reconstructing Marxism: Essays on Explanation and the Theory of History* (New York: Verso, 1992), 5–7.

12. This expression comes from Bertell Ollman, *Dialectical Investigations* (New York: Routledge, 1993). I wish to take this opportunity to acknowledge that my formulations in this book owe much to Ollman's works.
13. There is a huge debate on Marxist sources of these misconceptions. Engels is often held to be the first and the most influential in this regard. See, for instance, Zbigniew A. Jordan, *The Evolution of Dialectical Materialism* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1967), and more recently, Terrell Carver, *Engels* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981).
14. Given these qualifications and parameters, my overall aim coincides with a wonderful book by Melvin Rader, *Marx's Interpretation of History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979).

CHAPTER 1

1. The question posed in the chapter title is quoted from, Karl Marx, "The Leading Article in No. 179 of the Kölnische Zeitung" (New York: International Publishers, 1975), 1:191.
2. Louis Althusser, *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971), 120–121.
3. Because of the variation in terminology found in Marx's writings, the concept of human essence will also be expressed as "general human nature" or "universal human nature" in this book. In all cases, these terminologies will signify those uniquely human characteristics that hold true since, as Marx would have it, "the dawn of history."
4. Eugene Kamenka also advocates the view that in his later writings Marx rejected the conception of a "universal nature common to all men." Eugene Kamenka, *The Ethical Foundations of Marxism* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972), 146. See also Cornel West, *The Ethical Dimensions of Marxist Thought* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1991), 67. In this regard, the most surprising of all is István Mészáros's claim that Marx categorically rejected the concept of human essence. This claim sits very uneasily in the midst of his rich articulation of Marx's theory of alienation, which is inconceivable without the concept of human essence. István Mészáros, *Marx's Theory of Alienation* (London: Merlin Press, 2005), 13–14. Another otherwise excellent work that disappoints on the question of human essence is Vernon Venable, *Human Nature: The Marxian View* (Cleveland: Meridian Books, 1966), 4, 20, 22.This popular denial has been convincingly refuted before in Norman Geras, *Marx and Human Nature: Refutation of a Legend* (London: Verso, 1983). For other useful articulations of Marx's conception of human nature, see Erich Fromm, *Marx's Concept of Man* (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1961); Adam Schaff, *Marxism*

and the Human Individual (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1970); Sean Sayers, *Marxism and Human Nature* (New York: Routledge, 1998); Justin Holt, *Karl Marx's Philosophy of Nature, Action and Society: A New Analysis* (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009); Bertell Ollman, *Alienation: Marx's Conception of Man in Capitalist Society,* 2nd ed. (London: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 73–126; Jon Elster, *Making Sense of Marx* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 61–82; Allen Wood, *Karl Marx,* 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge), 16–43.

5. Karl Marx, *Critique of the Gotha Program* (New York: International Publishers, 1989), 24:87.
6. Marx's approach to human nature, in other words, must be understood through the prism of the philosophy of internal relations. This view has been sufficiently demonstrated in Ollman's *Alienation*. For another, very compelling defense of this view, see Kevin M. Brien, *Marx, Reason, and the Art of Freedom*, 2nd ed. (Amherst: Humanity Books, 2005), 2, also 19–26, and throughout.
7. Georg W. F. Hegel, *The Encyclopedia Logic*: *Part I of the Encyclopedia of Philosophical Sciences with the Zusatze* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1991), 176.
8. Herbert Marcuse, *Negations: Essays in Critical Theory* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968), 43. For a similar view that draws from Marcuse's works, see Fromm, *Marx's Concept of Man*, 26–28.
9. Ibid., 67.
10. Ibid., 43.
11. Essence, in the first instance, is unmediated. For this reason, "Hegel conceives of essence as a process in which 'mediated being' is posited through the overcoming of the unmediated being; essence has a *history*." Ibid., 67.
12. For reasons that will be offered in the next chapter, Hegel identifies essence with substance. In this context, note that Hegel borrows quite a bit from Baruch Spinoza, for whom "Substance cannot be produced by anything else and is therefore self-caused (causa sui); that is, its essence necessarily involves existence; that is, existence belongs to its nature." Baruch Spinoza, *Ethics: Treatise on the Foundation of the Intellect and Selected Letters* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1992), 33. It is in this sense that both Hegel and Marx seek to understand the essence of the substance in existence, as it exists and must exist. We shall argue later in this chapter that Marx's substance is human beings and that their essence must exist, and, a la Spinoza, that the existence of humans belongs to their nature. In other words, human nature is the dialectical unity of human essence and existence.
13. Karl Marx, "Notes" on Wagner's *Lehrbuch der politischen Oekonomie* (New York: International Publishers, 1989), 24:551. Marx uses this expression in a more limited sense in this context to explain the essence of value. However, as will be discussed throughout this book, the statement has much wider purchase.
14. Karl Marx, *Capital,* Vol. 3 (New York: International Publishers, 1998), 37:804.

15. David Harvey, *A Companion to Marx's Capital* (London: Verso, 2010).
16. Karl Marx, "Introduction" to *Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy* (New York: International Publishers, 1986), 28:42–43. This title is given to the major parts of Vols 28 and 29 of *Marx/Engels Collected Works.* The quoted volume will be noted with quotations and references. These parts are also known as *Grundrisse*.
17. Ibid., 45.
18. For a detailed and compelling explanation of Marx's method of abstraction, see Bertell Ollman, *Dance of the Dialectic: Steps in Marx's Method* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2003). According to Ollman, Marx engages in various distinctive modes of abstraction, which are "extension, level of generality, and vantage point" (Ibid., 74). Even though these are related modes, this paragraph is concerned with the mode of abstraction as "level of generality" (Ibid., 86–99).
19. As Vladimir I. Lenin usefully explains,

 > Such must also be the method of exposition (or, study) of dialectics in general . . . To begin with what is the simplest, most ordinary, common, etc., with any *proposition:* the leaves of a tree are green; John is a man: Fido is a dog, etc. Here already we have *dialectics* (as Hegel's genius recognised): the individual is the *universal* . . . Consequently, the opposites (the individual is opposed to the universal) are identical: the individual exists only in the connection that leads to the universal. The universal exists only in the individual and through the individual. Every individual is (in one way or another) a universal. Every universal is (a fragment, or an aspect, or the essence of) an individual. Every universal only approximately embraces all the individual objects. Every individual enters incompletely into the universal, etc., etc. Every individual is connected by thousands of transitions with other kinds of individuals (things, phenomena, processes) etc. *Here already* we have the elements, the germs, the concepts of *necessity,* of objective connection in nature, etc. Here already we have the contingent and the necessary, the phenomenon and the essence; for when we say: John is a man, Fido is a dog, *this* is a leaf of a tree, etc., we *disregard* a number of attributes as *contingent*; we separate the essence from the appearance, and counterpose the one to the other.

 V. I. Lenin, "On Dialectics," *Selected Works* (New York: International Publishers, 1943), 11:82–83
20. Karl Marx, "Preface to the First German Edition," *Capital*, Vol. 1 (New York: International Publishers, 1996), 35:10.
21. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The Holy Family* (New York: International Publishers, 1975), 4:93.
22. Karl Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* (New York: International Publishers, 1989), 32:492.
23. As Hegel observes, "wherever there is movement, wherever there is life, wherever anything is carried into effect in the actual world, there the Dialectic is at

work." Quoted in Melvin Rader, *Marx's Interpretation of History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), xviii. Here, the dialectic is viewed from the angle of the antithesis (contradictions) between things and the necessary role it plays in any organic development. The point emphasized here is the necessity of "movement" inherent in any contradictory relationship. For an excellent discussion of this thought in Hegel, see John W. Burbidge, *Hegel's Systematic Contingency* (New York: Palgrave, 2007), 117–122.

24. Karl Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach" (New York: International Publishers, 1976), 5:3–5.
25. Scholars, in several different ways, have interpreted the sixth thesis as Marx's rejection of the general human nature. For a sample of names and interpretations that make this claim, see Geras, *Marx and Human Nature,* 50–51.
26. For a very apt interpretation of the "Theses," besides that of Geras, see Schaff, *Marxism and the Human Individual*, 62.
27. For comparisons of Hegel and Marx, or explanations of Hegel's philosophy in a Marxist context, see Sidney Hook, *From Hegel to Marx: Studies in the Intellectual Development of Karl Marx* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994); George Lichtheim, *From Marx to Hegel* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1971); Herbert Marcuse, *Reason and Revolution: Hegel and the Rise of Social Theory* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1960); Mészáros, *Marx's Theory of Alienation*; Lucio Colletti, *From Rousseau to Lenin: Studies in Ideology and Society* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1972), 111–140; Shlomo Avineri, *The Social and Political Thought of Karl Marx* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), 96–105; Wood, *Karl Marx*, 197–226.
28. Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* (New York: International Publishers, 1975), 332–333. Marcuse explains this "achievement" of Hegel in a somewhat simplified manner:

 > (W)e must recall that Hegel's philosophy rests upon a specific interpretation of the subject-object relation. The traditional epistemological antagonism between subject (consciousness) and object, Hegel makes into a reflection of a definite historical antagonism. The object first appears as an object of desire, something to be worked up and appropriated in order to satisfy a human want. In the course of the appropriation, the object becomes manifest as "the otherness" of man. Man is not "with himself" when he deals with the objects of his desire and labor, but is dependent on an external power. He has to cope with nature, chance, and the interests of other proprietors. Development beyond this point of the relation between consciousness and the objective world is a social process. It leads first to the total "estrangement" of consciousness; man is overpowered by things he has himself made. The realization of reason therefore implies the overcoming of this estrangement, the establishment of a condition in which the subject knows and possesses itself in all its objects.

 Marcuse, *Reason and Revolution*, 259–260.

29. Georg W. F. Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Mind* (Mineola: Dover, 2003), 10.
30. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, 333–334.
31. Marcuse, *Reason and Revolution*, 260.
32. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, 333–334.
33. This leads to the conclusion that for Hegel (and Feuerbach), alienation is simply a ruse of reason, an inescapable misunderstanding, and nothing more. As Allen Wood aptly argues, "Hegel and Feuerbach hold that people are alienated only because they misunderstand themselves and the real nature of the human condition." Wood, *Karl Marx*, 13.
34. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, 336.
35. According to Feuerbach, "*The real in its reality and totality, the object of the new philosophy,* is the object also of a *real and total* being. The new philosophy therefore regards as its *epistemological principle,* as its *subject, not the ego, not the absolute—i.e.,* abstract spirit, *in short, not reason for itself alone—but* the *real* and the *whole being of man. Man* alone is the *reality, the subject of reason.* It is man who thinks, not the ego, not reason." Ludwig Feuerbach, "Principles of the Philosophy of the Future," in Wolfgang Schirmacher (ed.), *German Socialist Philosophy* (New York: Continuum, 1997), 40:7.
36. For a very competent and comprehensive interpretation of Feuerbach's philosophy, see Marx W. Wartofsky, *Feuerbach* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982).
37. Ludwig Feuerbach, *The Essence of Christianity* (Amherst: Prometheus Books, 1989), xiii-xiv.
38. Feuerbach, "Principles of the Philosophy of the Future," 60.
39. Marcuse, *Reason and* Revolution, 271.
40. Wartofsky, *Feuerbach*, xi.
41. Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach," 3.
42. Karl Marx, *Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law: Introduction* (New York: International Publishers, 1975), 3:175.
43. Geras, *Marx and Human Nature*, 31.
44. As Ollman well captures, when Marx "declares that man 'is nature' or that his objects 'reside in the nature of his being', the ties to which our attention is drawn are clearly *not* external ones. Rather, the individual is held to be in some kind of union with his object; they are *in* fact relationally contained in one another, which requires that each be conceived of as a Relation." Ollman, *Alienation*, 27–28. The philosophy of internal relations is discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.
45. Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach," 7. Here, Engels's rendition of this thesis is used for better clarity.
46. Marx, *Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy*, 28:195.
47. In this context, Marx states, "As far as Feuerbach is a materialist he does not deal with history, and as far as he considers history he is not a materialist. With him materialism and history diverge completely . . . " Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The German Ideology* (New York: International Publishers, 1976), 41.

48. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844,* 332–333.
49. Ibid., 299. See also, Schaff, *Marxism and the Human Individual,* 63.
50. Marx, "Introduction" to *Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy,* 28:17–18.
51. Ibid., 25. This type of critique follows from Marx's earlier critique of Max Stirner's attempt to "maximize individual freedom" by "abstracting an 'I' without any messy presuppositions." As Ollman argues, Marx was not content with this derivation of the "I," which too narrowly treated it as the "isolated individual . . . Yet, something like Stirner's 'I,' in the person of the isolated individual, has become the standard way of thinking about human nature in capitalist society." Bertell Ollman, *Dialectical Investigations* (New York: Routledge, 1993), 41.
52. Marx, "Introduction" to *Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy,* 28:18. The original text reads "zoon politikon" in Greek letters.
53. As Ollman explains, in Marx's usage, " 'needs' are relatively simple, at least when viewed apart from their relationship to 'powers'. For Marx, 'need' refers to the desire one feels for something, usually something which is not immediately available." Ollman, *Alienation,* 75.
54. As Agnes Heller explains, "No specific product or need *possesses* the quality of being a luxury product or need. That is determined solely by the question of whether the object is possessed and used (and therefore the corresponding need is satisfied) by the majority of the population or only by that minority which represents a significantly higher level of purchasing power as a result of the social division of labor. As a consequence of increasing productivity, and as a consequence of changes in the social structure, needs that originally were luxury needs become necessary needs, without their undergoing the slightest qualitative modification." Agnes Heller, *The Theory of Need in Marx* (New York: St. Martin Press, 1976), 33–37.
55. According to Ollman, "For Marx . . . 'need' is always attached to 'power' . . . Each power is coupled with a distinctive need for the objects necessary for its realization, to make itself known and allow its development as a power. Likewise, a power is whatever is used that 'fulfills' a need. To know any power is therefore to know its corresponding need and vice versa."Ollman, *Alienation,* 76.
56. Ludwig Feuerbach, "Preliminary Theses on the Reform of Philosophy," in Wolfgang Schirmacher (ed.), *German Socialist Philosophy* (New York: Continuum, 1997), 40:51.
57. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844,* 336–337.
58. Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology,* 42–43.
59. Ibid.
60. Marx, *Capital,* Vol. 1, 181.
61. Marx, "Introduction" to *Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy,* 28:29.
62. As Marx comments, " . . . originally, human needs [are] also slight. They themselves grow with the development of the productive forces." Marx, *Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy,* 28:531.

63. Karl Marx, *Wage Labour and Capital* (New York: International Publishers, 1977), 9:216.
64. Marx, *Capital,* Vol. 1, 53. Marx also repeats this thought in the third volume of *Capital:* a human being must "wrestle with Nature to satisfy his wants, to maintain and reproduce life . . . and he must do this in all social formations and under all possible social formations." Marx, *Capital,* Vol. 3, 807.
65. Heller, *The Theory of Need in Marx,* 42.
66. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844,* 276.
67. Marx, *Capital,* Vol. 1, 187–188.
68. For a great discussion, see Paul M. Sweezy, *The Theory of Capitalist Development* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1970), 18–19.
69. Marx, *Capital,* Vol. 1, 187–188.
70. Marx, *Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy,* 28:418.
71. Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology,* 31.
72. As he says there, humans "begin to distinguish themselves from animals as soon as they begin to produce their means of subsistence . . . " Ibid.
73. Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, 31:185
74. Marx, *Capital,* Vol. 1, 605, fn. 2.
75. Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach," 5.
76. Marx, "The Leading Article in No. 179 of the Kölnische Zeitung," 191.

Chapter 2

1. For a detailed historical discussion of the Marxist debates on this issue, see Zbigniew A. Jordan, *The Evolution of Dialectical Materialism* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1967). Jordan univocally states, "In the technical meaning of these terms, historical materialism is neither an application of dialectical materialism nor can it be inferred therefrom" Ibid., 297. For an excellent work that shows consistency between these terms, see Melvin Rader, *Marx's Interpretation of History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979).
2. Karl Marx, "Afterword to the Second German Edition," *Capital,* Vol. 1 (New York: International Publishers, 1996), 19.
3. Louis Althusser, *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971), 112.
4. Ibid., 114.
5. Thus, Lenin's "*discovery* with respect to Marx and Engels" is that "Marx's scientific theory did not lead to a new philosophy, but to a new *practice* of philosophy based on a proletarian class position in philosophy." What this partially involves, according to Althusser, is that "philosophy is a *practice* of political *intervention* carried out in a theoretical form." It "intervenes in two privileged domains, the political domain of the effects of class struggle and the theoretical domain of the effects of scientific practice." Philosophy itself, in turn, is effected by these effects in which it intervenes. Ibid., 107–108. This position suggested by Althusser erroneously reduces philosophy to science, though this is not the primary concern here.

6. Marx clearly says, "in the process of individual interest acquiring independent existence as class interest the personal behaviour of the individual is bound to be . . . estranged . . . " Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The German Ideology* (New York: International Publishers, 1976), 245. See also Allen Wood, *Karl Marx* (New York: Routledge), 96.
7. Althusser, *Lenin and Philosophy,* 123–124.
8. First, Hegel's "being = nothingness" means that, if stripped of all predicates, being is simply nothing, and not that subject must be completely suppressed. Second, "Subject negates Subject" refers in Hegel to the process of self-realization in which negation is not annihilation, but rather the self-transcendence, more concrete determination, of the subject. Hegel says that the Idea (subject) "posits determinations in itself, then negates them, and thereby gains in this negation (*Aufheben*) an affirmative, richer, and more concrete determination."
9. Althusser later revised this position, though without successfully incorporating the implications of his self-correction into his interpretation of Marx. Louis Althusser, *Essays in Self-Criticism* (London: NLB, 1976), 105–119. More importantly, these characterizations of Marx's approach as determinism still remain very popular in the academia. Many attribute to him a fully determined humankind, which requires the conception of a human being merely as a thing. Others, who emphasize freedom, such as Sartre, reduce humans to pure consciousness. A much more accurate and dialectical view is offered by Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962), 434–453. On a related note, Althusser also gave several different versions of the presumed break between the humanist and the scientific Marx. For a very useful discussion and critique, see Margaret A. Majumdar, *Althusser and the End of Leninism?* (London: Pluto Press, 1995), 33.
10. Althusser surprisingly draws the following conclusion after rejecting the notion of human subject: "Perhaps we can learn a lesson from this for the present and for the future . . . on one condition, which Marx demanded of his reader, on the threshold of *Capital*: that he has the courage to '*think for himself*' and about what is in preparation, even at moderate and long distance, what is in preparation among the masses, for it is they and not the philosophers who make history." Althusser, *Lenin and Philosophy*, 124–125.
11. Althusser, *Essays in Self-Criticism,* 201–202. In a similar fashion, Althusser, in yet another work, reduces humanism to a vision, which "reduces . . . the relations of production to relations between men, i.e., *human relations* . . . " Louis Althusser and Etienne Balibar, *Reading Capital* (London: Verso, 2009), 199, also 189. On the basis of such thoughts, Resnick and Wolff argue, "Althusser seeks to theorize human subjects as overdetermined *in* society and thereby actively producing in turn their effects." Stephen A. Resnick and Richard D. Wolff, *Knowledge and Class: A Marxian Critique of Political Economy* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1989), 100, also 81–94. The concept of overdetermination will be discussed in Chapter 3.

12. Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* (New York: International Publishers, 1975), 336.
13. Georg W. F. Hegel, *Hegel's Science of Logic* (New York: Humanity Books, 1989), 154–155.
14. According to Hegel, as Lucio Colletti puts it, the pantheists "want to derive the existence of God from that of the world, maintaining that the existence of the creature can demonstrate that of the creator. In so doing, they do not realize that in their syllogism, the world, which is 'nothing' becomes the basis of proof, and that God, who is everything, becomes a mere consequence or something mediated." Lucio Colletti, *From Rousseau to Lenin: Studies in Ideology and Society* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1972), 113–114.
15. Hegel, *Hegel's Science of Logic,* 154–155.
16. It is well known that for the materialist Hume, for instance, moral approbation and disapprobation are linked to universal human sentiments of pleasure and pain that result from experience through sense perception. See David Hume, *En Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1983). Or as he puts it more resolutely elsewhere, "all our ideas are nothing but copies of our impressions, or, in other words, . . . it is impossible for us to *think* of anything which we have not antecedently *felt,* either by our external or internal senses." David Hume, *An Inquiry Concerning Human Understanding* (Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall, 1995), 74. However, Hume's philosophy fails to acknowledge "negative thought," which can negate facts, or transcend them. As Marcuse puts it, "this materialist investigation" confines "man within the limits of 'the given' within the existing order of things and events . . . The result was not only skepticism but conformism." In order to avoid this, Hegel, according to Marcuse, argued that "facts by themselves possess no authority." In contrast, "Hegel's philosophy is . . . a negative philosophy . . . motivated by the conviction that the given facts that appear to common sense as the positive index of truth are in reality the negation of truth, so that the truth can only be established by their destruction." Herbert Marcuse, *Reason and Revolution: Hegel and the Rise of Social Theory* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1960), 26–27.
17. Hegel, *Hegel's Science of Logic,* 161.
18. Kant argued that the speculative reason of humans can know phenomena only as they are perceived, but can never grasp the noumena, though he left the relationship between phenomena and noumena unclear. Human beings are, however, not completely excluded from the noumenal world, because the human capacity for acting as a moral agent (practical reason) requires the postulation of the noumenal world as one in which freedom and god reside. This postulation, however, is not based on knowledge.
19. Hegel, *Hegel's Science of Logic,* 824–826.
20. The Absolute Idea is the substance for Hegel. It is useful to note the relationship of Hegel's substance with that of Spinoza, who says,

> When I say that I mean by substance that which is conceived through and in itself; and that I mean by modification or accident that which is

> in something else, and is conceived that wherein it is, evidently it follows that substance is by nature prior to its accidents. For without the former the latter can neither be nor be conceived. Secondly, it follows that besides substances and accidents nothing exists really or *externally to the intellect.*

Baruch Spinoza*, Improvement of the Understanding: Ethics and Correspondence of Benedict de Spinoza* (New York: M. Walter Dunne, 1901), 287.

21. Georg W. F. Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Mind* (Mineola: Dover, 2003)*,* 9.
22. Georg W. F. Hegel, *Introduction to the Philosophy of History* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1988), 12–13.
23. Ibid., 67. As Kaufmann explains, Hegel uses "aufheben" to mean, " 'cancel,' and 'preserve' or 'keep.' " "When Hegel uses the term in its double (or triple) meaning—and he expressly informs us that he does—he may be said to visualize how something is picked up in order that it may no longer be *there* just the way it was, although, of course it is not cancelled altogether but lifted up to be kept on a different level." Walter Kaufmann, *Hegel: A Reinterpretation* (Garden City: Anchor, 1965), 144.
24. Hegel, *Introduction to the Philosophy of History,* 22.
25. However, it is highly questionable whether or not Hegel succeeds in proving the existence of the nonveritable, finite nature through the absolute Idea (or God). Indeed, since for him the Absolute as everything is also nothing without its determinations, he at times reduces the Idea to, or derives it from, existence. Although Hegel speaks of a world history caused by the dialectical self-realization of the Idea, he also finds the Idea in the head of the philosopher rather impotent. Thus, he stipulates that philosophy always comes too late and proves incapable of issuing instructions on "how the world ought to be." Georg W. F. Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 23.

 Miller's observation of Hegel's point is apt:

 > For Hegel, world-historical changes are always a ruse of reason, the unintended consequence of the life style of a people and the self-assertion of a hero. The attempt to bring a better world about intentionally, through rational reflection on available facts, is always doomed. 'The owl of Minerva takes flight only at dusk.' This passive attitude towards the future is . . . (what) Marx most strenuously renounced.

 Richard W. Miller, *Analyzing Marx: Morality, Power and History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 90. This position assumes that consciousness (as philosophy) cannot go beyond the mere comprehension of the world as it exists. In other words, the self-realization of thought—the second proposition—was to be achieved through the logical negation of the object world—the third proposition—thus giving thought an independent existence. But, as it turns out, thought cannot go beyond the existing material reality and, as such, becomes dependent upon it. This, according to

Avineri's plausible conclusion, brings out Hegel's conservatism, "which ultimately makes thought dependent on existing, historical reality, though it denies doing this." Shlomo Avineri, *The Social and Political Thought of Karl Marx* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), 99. If so, Hegel fails to avoid conformism, which leads him to moral positivism (see Chapter 7).

26. Karl Marx, "Letter to Ludwig Kugelmann" (New York: International Publishers, 1987), 42:544.
27. Marx, "Afterword to the Second German Edition," 19–20.
28. Karl Marx, *Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy* (New York: International Publishers, 1986), 28:418.
29. Marx, *Capital,* Vol. 1, 187–188.
30. As Hook also observes, "It is clear . . . that consciousness is an integral part of the social process . . . " Sidney Hook, *From Hegel to Marx: Studies in the Intellectual Development of Karl Marx* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 71.
31. Hegel, *Introduction to the Philosophy of History,* 25.
32. In Marcuse's words,

> It is not man who recollects essence, who grasps the world of beings which confront him, overcomes its bad immediacy posits it a new through the knowledge of essence; rather for Hegel all this occurs within rational Being itself. Man participates in this process only as the subject of cognition insofar as he is rational being.
>
> Herbert Marcuse, *Negations: Essays in Critical Theory* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968), 68. As Georg Lukacs recognized, Marx's dialectic on the contrary establishes a "bond between consciousness and action.

Georg Lukacs, *History and Class Consciousness*: *Studies in Marxist Dialectics* (Cambridge: The MIT University Press, 1997), 2. In other words, "Man himself is the objective foundation of the historical dialectic and the subject-object lying at its roots, and as such he is decisively involved in the dialectical process." Ibid., 189. Thus, according to Marx, humans are the historical subject and for them history is "a known history, and as an act of coming-to-be it is a conscious self-transcending act of coming-to-be." Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844,* 337.

Lukacs's own interpretation has been deemed (too) idealistic, which brings Marx close to the Hegelian position he rejected. Martin Jay, for instance, claims that Lukacs reduces "subjectivity to consciousness." Martin Jay, *Marxism and Totality* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1984), 115. See also Colletti, *From Rousseau to Lenin,* 133–135.

33. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844,* 337.
34. Aristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 267–268.
35. Ludwig Feuerbach, "Preliminary Theses on the Reform of Philosophy," in Wolfgang Schirmacher (ed.), *German Socialist Philosophy* (New York: Continuum, 1997), 51.

36. Karl R. Popper, *The Open Society and Its Enemies: Hegel and Marx* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), 104.
37. Ibid., 106.
38. Ibid., 84–86.
39. Ibid.,106.
40. To my knowledge, Marx uses the expression "capitalism" once or twice in the third volume of *Capital*. However, it would be absurd to claim that he does not have a theory of capitalism.
41. Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology,* 31.
42. For a succinct, accessible, and accurate statement of Marx's materialism that coincides with mine, see Erich Fromm, *Marx's Concept of Man* (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1961), 8–19.
43. Marx and Engels, *The Holy Family,* 130–131.
44. This link is clearly established in *The German Ideology,* 38–39
45. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844,* 336.
46. Adam Schaff, *Marxism and the Human Individual* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1970), 168.
47. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844,* 336.
48. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The Holy Family* (New York: International Publishers, 1975), 93.
49. Engels writes, "*Real humanism* has no more dangerous enemy in Germany than *spiritualism* or *speculative idealism,* which substitutes *'self-consciousness'* or the *'spirit'* for the *real individual man* and with the evangelist teaches: 'It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing.' Needless to say, this incorporeal spirit is spiritual only in its imagination." Marx and Engels, "Foreword," *The Holy Family,* 8. The foreword was written by Engels as the declared objective of this book written with Marx. As Robert Tucker further explains:

 > The idealist starts from the "heaven" of theory and attempts to descend to the "earth" of practice. He proceeds from man's "sacred history" or thought-process in the effort to comprehend the historical process as a whole. The materialist, on the other hand, begins with the "real life process" or "practical developmental process of man." He takes his stand on "earth" and adopts man's "profane history" as the starting point of theory.

 Robert Tucker, *Philosophy and Myth in Karl Marx* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964), 178–179.
50. Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology,* 55.
51. Ibid., 39–40.
52. Ibid., 31.
53. Ibid., 41–42.
54. Karl Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (New York: International Publishers, 1979), 11:103.
55. Karl Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* (New York: International Publishers, 1989), 32:492.
56. Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology,* 52.

57. Jon Elster, *Making Sense of Marx* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 107.
58. Ibid., 116–118. The evidence Elster provides to endorse this view is no evidence at all. All the quotations he provides in this context require a significant stretch of the imagination to agree with his conclusions.
59. Karl Marx, "Letter to Otechestvenniye Zapiski" (New York: International Publishers, 1989), 21:196–201.
60. Elster, *Making Sense of Marx,* 118.
61. Marx, "Letter to Otechestvenniye Zapiski," 196–201.
62. Ibid., 199–200.
63. Marx, "Preface to the First German Edition," *Capital,* Vol. 1, 8.
64. Marx, *Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy*, 28:95.
65. Elster, *Making Sense of Marx,* 113.
66. Marx, "Introduction" to *Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy,* 28:46.
67. Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology,* 49.
68. Ibid., 51.
69. Marx, "Introduction" to *Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy,* 28:46.
70. Elster, *Making Sense of Marx,* 109.
71. Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology,* 50–53.
72. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (New York: International Publishers, 1976), 6:487–488.
73. Karl Marx, "The British Rule in India" (New York: International Publishers, 1979), 12:125–133. This article is also interpreted by Elster as evidence that Marx justifies human suffering for teleological reasons. Chapter 5 will reject this interpretation.
74. Marx, "Introduction" to *Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy,* 28:46.
75. Elster, *Making Sense of Marx,* 116.
76. As Geras also argues, this view cannot be attributed to Marx. Norman Geras, *Marx and Human Nature: Refutation of a Legend* (London: Verso, 1983), 91.
77. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844,* 306.
78. Marx, *Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy,* 28:99.
79. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844,* 303–304.
80. Hegel, *Introduction to the Philosophy of History,* 35.
81. Georg W. F. Hegel, *The Encyclopedia Logic: Part I of the Encyclopedia of Philosophical Sciences with the Zusatze* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1991), 30.
82. Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right,* 23.
83. Ibid., 21.
84. "Bourgeois society is the most developed and many-faceted historic organisation of production. The categories which express its relations, an understanding of its structure, therefore, provide, at the same time, an insight into the structure and the relations of production of all previous forms of society the ruins and components of which were used in the creation of bourgeois society." Marx, "Introduction" to *Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy,* 28:42.
85. For instance,

> Personal independence based upon dependence *mediated by things* is the second [capitalistic] form, and only in it is a system of general social exchange of matter, a system of universal relations, universal requirements and universal capacities, formed. Free individuality, based on the universal development of individuals and the subordination of their communal, social productivity, which is their social possession, is . . . [communism]. The second stage creates the conditions for the third.

Marx, *Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy,* 28:95.

86. In an early work, Marx, on the "*idea* of communism," comments that it should be regarded "as a real advance to have gained beforehand a consciousness of the limited character as well as the goal" of the communistic "historical movement—and a consciousness which reaches out beyond . . . " this historical movement. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844,* 313.
87. Hegel, *Introduction to the Philosophy of History,* 24.
88. Ibid., 35.
89. Ibid., 39.
90. Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right,* 20. What this means exactly is open to interpretation. Hegel suggests, in *Logic,* that "actual" should not be confused with appearance. Rather, actual refers to the rational essence to the extent that it has realized itself. However it may be interpreted, the point remains that the world is as it ought to be.
91. Hegel, *Introduction to the Philosophy of History,* 12–13.
92. Ibid., 333–334.
93. Marcuse, *Reason and Revolution,* 260.
94. Marx, "Afterword to the Second German Edition," 19–20.
95. Ibid.

CHAPTER 3

1. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The German Ideology* (New York: International Publishers, 1976), 53.
2. Herbert Marcuse, *Reason and Revolution: Hegel and the Rise of Social Theory* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1960), 295.
3. My analysis of internal relations in this chapter owes much to Bertell Ollman, *Alienation: Marx's Conception of Man in Capitalist Society,* 2nd ed. (London: Cambridge University Press, 1976); *The Dance of the Dialectic* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2003); and *Dialectical Investigations* (New York: Routledge, 1993). In formulating this chapter, I also benefited from reading Melvin Rader, *Marx's Interpretation of History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979); Kevin M. Brien, *Marx, Reason, and the Art of Freedom,* 2nd ed. (Amherst: Humanity Books, 2005); Carol C. Gould, *Marx's Social Ontology: Individuality and Community in Marx's Theory of Social Reality* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1980); and Derek Sayer, *The Violence of Abstraction: The Analytical Foundations of Historical Materialism* (London:

Basil Blackwell, 1987). For a very useful and accurate essay that explores Marx's dialectic method from the angle of internal relations, see Sean Sayers, "Marxism and the Dialectical Method: A Critique of G. A. Cohen," *Radical Philosophy* 36, no. 1 (1984): 4–13. For a very useful, non-Marxist, discussion and defense of internal relations, see Brand Blanshard, *The Nature of Thought,* Vol. 2 (London: George Allen & Urwin Ltd., 1939), especially 457–520.

4. George V. Plekhanov, *Fundamental Problems of Marxism* (New York: International Publishers, 1969), 80.
5. Ibid., 52.
6. Plekhanov offers what Rader calls "the dialectical version" of the "fundamentalist interpretation." The latter version is based on "three propositions: first, that the various strata in the social order—the economic system, the state and its laws, and the various cultural spheres . . . —are distinct and externally related; second, that changes in the economic stratum produce corresponding changes in the other strata; third, that the causal determination is entirely or almost exclusively one-way, with the economic system determining the 'superstructure' and not vice versa." The "dialectical version" of this quoted text simply adds that there is a causal interaction between them. One problem with this version is that the interaction, and hence the dialectic, is perceived merely as interactivity, and not also as "interpenetration." The latter calls for an internal-relations understanding of the Marxian dialectic. Rader, *Marx's Interpretation of History,* 3.
7. H. B. Acton, *The Illusion of the Epoch: Marxism-Leninism as a Philosophical Creed* (London: Cohen & West, 1955).
8. G. A. Cohen, *Karl Marx's Theory of History: A Defence* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), 135.
9. G. A. Cohen, "Base and Superstructure: A Reply to Hugh Collins," *Oxford Journal of Legal Studies* 9, no. 1 (1989): 95. However, he does not quite explain in Marxian terms what it means to "explain the character" of something. To do so requires reference to the philosophy of internal relations.
10. For a very competent, entrenched critique of Cohen's determinism, see Joseph Ferrarro, *Freedom and Determination in History According to Marx & Engels* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1992).
11. Cohen, *Karl Marx's Theory of History,* 28.
12. Eric O. Wright, Andrew Levine, and Elliott Sober*, Reconstructing Marxism* (New York: Verso, 1992), 20.
13. Cohen, *Karl Marx's Theory of History,* 35.
14. Cohen also excludes the elements of superstructure. Ibid., 32.
15. Sayers, "Marxism and the Dialectical Method," 9.
16. Louis Althusser, *For Marx* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1969), 99.
17. Ibid., 101.
18. Ibid., 205.
19. Ibid., 102.
20. However, elsewhere, Althusser, without knowing it, explains Marx's theory of structure on the basis of internal relations. See, Louis Althusser and Etienne Balibar, *Reading Capital* (London: Verso, 2009)*,* 96–99, 188–189.

21. Karl Marx, *Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy* (New York: International Publishers, 1986), 29:263.
22. Karl Marx, *Capital,* Vol. 1 (New York: International Publishers, 1996), 92–93, fn. 1. However, it must be noted that Marx himself acknowledged a difference between undeveloped and developed modes of production, arguing that "it is evident that tradition must play a dominant role in the primitive and undeveloped circumstances on which these social production relations and the corresponding mode of production are based." *Capital,* Vol. 3, 779. As Elster notes, this passage suggests that Marx "retained his belief in the general character of his theory of the superstructure." Elster, *Making Sense of Marx,* 238.
23. Cohen, "Base and Superstructure," 95.
24. In these passages, to clarify, "the mode of production" refers to the activity of production, and not to the whole system of social relations, which the same expression sometimes also designates in Marx's writings. See later in text for additional clarification.
25. István Mészáros, *Marx's Theory of Alienation* (London: Merlin Press, 2005), 103.
26. Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology,* 53.
27. Marx, *Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy,* 29:263.
28. As Ollman explains,

> Not only do these expressions have different referents (in the case of "social existence" the contrast would seem to be considerable), but some of them appear to include in their meaning part of the reality which Marx says they "determine." Thus, property relations as a system of legal claims comes under the heading of superstructure, but they are also a component of the relations of production which "determines" this superstructure. The same difficulty arises with class struggle, which constitutes part of the political life of society while also being an element in the economic structure that is said to "determine" political life.

Ollman, *Alienation,* 6–7.
Ollman's point can be observed in the following types of statements by Marx: "the struggle of class against class is a political struggle." *The German Ideology,* 211; or "*Every class struggle is a political struggle*;" Ibid., 493. The same point is made from a different angle elsewhere: "Do not say that social movement excludes political movement. There is never a political movement which is not at the same time social." Karl Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy* (New York: International Publishers, 1976), 6:212.
29. Marx, *Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy,* 28:46.
30. To use Hegel's terminology, each moment is determined by becoming "an other, but the other is itself a something; therefore it likewise becomes an other, and so on ad infinitum." Georg W. F. Hegel, *The Encyclopedia Logic*: *Part I of the Encyclopedia of Philosophical Sciences with the Zusatze* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1991), 149.

31. It appears that the distinction between relations of structure and of superstructure can be attained by the differentiated functions and spheres in which these relations are primarily and immanently obtained within the whole. As Marx explains, "every movement in which the working class comes out as a *class* against the ruling classes and tries to coerce them by PRESSURE FROM WITHOUT is a POLITICAL MOVEMENT . . . the attempt in a particular factory or even in a particular trade to force a shorter working day out of individual capitalist . . . is a purely economic movement. On the other hand, the movement to force through an eight-hour, etc. *law* is a *political* movement." Karl Marx, "Marx to Friedrich Bolte" (New York: International Publishers, 1989), 44:258.
32. Karl Marx, **"**Moralising Criticism and Critical Morality: A Contribution to German Cultural History Contra Karl Heinzen" (New York: International Publishers, 1976), 6:321, 312–340.
33. This passage also contains the following interesting remarks:

> It is a fine recognition of man that degrades him to a "*force*" capable of creating wealth! The bourgeois sees in the proletarian not a *human being,* but a *force* capable of creating wealth, a force which moreover he can then compare with other productive forces—an animal, a machine—and if the comparison proves unfavourable to man, the force of which man is the bearer must give place to the force of which the bearer is an animal or a machine, although in that case man still has (enjoys) the honour of figuring as a "productive force."
>
> If I characterise man as an "exchange value," this expression already implies that social conditions have transformed him into a "thing." If I treat him as a "productive force," I am putting in the place of the real subject a different subject, I am substituting another person for him, and he now exists only as a cause of wealth.
>
> The whole of human society becomes merely a machine for the creation of wealth.

Karl Marx, "Draft of an Article on Friedrich List's Book: *Das Nationale System der Politischen Oekonomie*" (New York: International Publishers, 1975), 4:285–286.

34. Cohen, *Karl Marx's Theory of History,* ix.
35. As Marx comments in a similar context, Hegel's and his own dialectic "regards every historically developed social form as in fluid movement . . . " Marx, "Afterword to the Second German Edition," *Capital,* Vol. 1, 20.
36. As Hegel would have it, definitions are "dangerous." "*Omnis definitio in jure civili periculosa*"; that is, any definition in civil law is dangerous. Georg W. F. Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 26.

37. Frederick Engels, "Engels to Marx" (New York: International Publishers, 1987), 42:382.
38. Ollman, *Dialectical Investigations,* 44.
39. Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy,* 166.
40. William H. Shaw, "The Handmill Gives You the Feudal Lord: Marx's Technological Determinism," *History and Theory* 18, no. 2 (1979), 155–176.
41. As Ollman justly observes, the presence of this type of explanations in Marx should be seen as "a handy shorthand and first approximation for bringing out for purposes of exposition some special feature in a conclusion whose essential connections have been uncovered by studying them as preconditions and results." Ollman, *Dialectical Investigations,* 140.
42. Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy,* 166.
43. Ibid., 187.
44. Marx, *Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy,* 28:46. Unfortunately, Marx did not elaborate much on the logic of the difference.
45. Marx, *Capital,* Vol. 3, 801. Marx treats property relations in the same relational way. When private property is abolished, or turned into communal property, "only the social character of the property . . . is changed. It loses its class character." Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (New York: International Publishers, 1976), 499.
46. Marx, *Capital,* Vol. 1, 753.
47. Here I am assuming that the social relation between the wage-laborer and the capitalist constitutes a form of social alienation. I will justify this assumption in Chapter 4.
48. Marx, *Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy,* 28:23.
49. To complicate things even further, Marx also says elsewhere, "By social we understand the co-operation of several individuals, no matter under what conditions, in what manner and to what end. It follows from this that a certain mode of production and industrial stage, is always combined with a certain mode of co-operation, or social stage, and this mode of co-operation is itself a 'productive force.' " Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology,* 42–43. In this sense, social relations (division of labor and cooperation) constitute a productive force in their own right.
50. Karl Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* (New York: International Publishers, 1994), 34:122.
51. Marx, *Capital,* Vol. 3, 867.
52. Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy,* 34:389.
53. Marx, *Capital,* Vol. 3, 805–806.
54. Karl Marx, *Wage Labour and Capital* (New York: International Publishers, 1977), 214.
55. Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, 30:115–116.
56. This view contradicts certain aspects of what is known as "systematic dialectic," which argues that

> systematic dialectic, as employed by Hegel and Marx, investigates the conceptual connections between the inner forms of a given whole; a sequence of categorical levels is established in which more developed forms ground earlier ones. This logic does not depend in any way upon the historical developments that first threw up the elementary preconditions of the system, for these are grounded and articulated within the logical ordering itself.

But the "logic" in question here is "capital logic," which treats capital as a self-subsistent totality capable of reproducing and expanding itself from within itself, as the subject of itself. Christopher J. Arthur, *Science & Society* 62, no. 3 (1998): 447–459.

57. As Hegel states, "The moving principle of the concept, which not only dissolves the particularizations of the universal but also produces them is what I call *dialectic.*" This dialectic "consists not merely in producing and apprehending the determination as an opposite, and limiting factor, but in producing and apprehending the *positive* content and result which it contains; and it is this alone which makes it a *development* and immanent progression." Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right,* 60.
58. It is worth noting that Kant, before Hegel and Marx, articulated this form of dialectical causality very clearly:

> For a thing to be a natural purpose in the *first* place it is requisite that its parts (as regards their being and their form) are only possible through their reference to the whole. For the thing itself is a purpose and so is comprehended under a concept or an Idea which must determine *a priori* all that is to be contained in it. But so far as a thing is only thought as possible in this way, it is a mere work of art; *i.e.* a product of one rational cause distinct from the matter (of the parts), whose causality (in the collection and combination of the parts) is determined through its Idea of a whole possible by their means (and consequently not through external nature).
>
> But if a thing as a natural product is to involve in itself and in its internal possibility a reference to purposes,—*i.e.* to be possible only as a natural purpose, and without the causality of the concepts of rational beings external to itself,—then it is requisite *secondly* that its parts should so combine in the unity of a whole that they are reciprocally cause and effect of each other's form. Only in this way can the Idea of the whole conversely (reciprocally) determine the form and combination of all the parts; not indeed as cause—for then it would be an artificial product—but as the ground of cognition, for him who is judging it, of the systematic unity and combination of all the manifold contained in the given material.
>
> For a body then which is to be judged in itself and its internal possibility as a natural purpose, it is requisite that its parts mutually depend upon

> each other both as to their form and their combination, and so produce a whole by their own causality; while conversely the concept of the whole may be regarded as its cause according to a principle (in a being possessing a causality according to concepts adequate to such a product). In this case then the connexion of *effective causes* may be judged as an *effect through final causes.*
>
> In such a product of nature every part not only exists *by means of* the other parts, but is thought as existing *for the sake of* the others and the whole, that is as an (organic) instrument. Thus, however, it might be an artificial instrument, and so might be represented only as a purpose that is possible in general; but also its parts are all organs reciprocally *producing* each other. This can never be the case with artificial instruments, but only with nature which supplies all the material for instruments (even for those of art). Only a product of such a kind can be called a *natural purpose,* and this because it is an *organised* and *self-organising being.*

Immanuel Kant, *The Critique of Judgment* (Amherst: Prometheus Books, 2000), 276–278.

59. Karl Marx, "Marx to Engels," July 31, 1865 (New York: International Publishers, 1987), 42:173.
60. Georg W. F. Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Mind* (Mineola: Dover, 2003), 11.
61. Marx, "Introduction" to *Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy,* 28:37.
62. Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy,* 166.
63. Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Mind,* 2.
64. Sidney Hook, *From Hegel to Marx: Studies in the Intellectual Development of Karl Marx* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 62; Rader, *Marx's Interpretation of History,* 73.
65. Marx also argues that the logical and historical primacy come together, suggesting that historical development and logical development parallel each other. See Marx, *Capital,* Vol. 1, 327.
66. Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology,* 53.
67. Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* (New York: International Publishers, 1975), 294.
68. Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right,* 26. Hegel says elsewhere that the same can be said of the Absolute, in that it is both the presupposition and the result. This statement constitutes a dialectical contradiction and suggests that there is a process of mediation in which both ends of the circle are resolved into each other. Hegel, *The Phenomenology of the Mind,* 11.
69. Marx, "Introduction" to *Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy,* 28:28.
70. Ibid., 28–29.
71. Ibid., 30.
72. Ibid., 31.
73. Derek Sayer, whose excellent critique of Cohen's approach should be acknowledged much more than it has been, commits the error of not distinguishing the activity of production from production relations. In other

words, he does not go any deeper than social relations in elucidating the essence of capitalism. However, many of the passages he quotes from Marx actually explicitly highlight humans and their activity as the essence. See Chapter 3, especially section 3, of his otherwise brilliant book *The Violence of Abstraction.*

74. Marx, "Introduction" to *Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy,* 28:36–37.
75. Ibid., 23.
76. Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy,* 30:97–98.
77. Marx, "Introduction" to *Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy,* 28:45.
78. Marx, *Capital,* Vol. 1, 226–227.
79. Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy,* 30:116.
80. Marx, *Capital,* Vol. 3, 866.
81. This vocabulary is derived from Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right,* 20.
82. The fuller context of this statement by Hegel provides additional clues to understanding Marx's approach, though the language of the "Idea" must be substituted:

> The Idea must continually determine itself further within itself, for initially it is no more than an abstract concept. But this initial abstract concept is never abandoned. On the contrary, it merely becomes continually richer in itself, to the last determination is also the richest. Those determinations which previously existed only in themselves thereby attain their free self-sufficiency, but in such a way that the concept remains the soul which holds everything together and which arrives at its own differentiation only through an immanent process. One cannot therefore say that the concept arrives at anything new; on the contrary, the last determination coincides in unity with the first. Thus, even if the concept appears to have become fragmented in its existence, this is merely a semblance, as is subsequently confirmed when all its details finally return in the concept of the universal.

Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right,* 61.

83. Marx, *Capital,* Vol. 3, 805–806.
84. For a very similar and very apt discussion, see Mészáros, *Marx's Theory of Alienation,* 103–104.
85. Marx, *Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy,* 28:197.
86. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844,* 274.
87. Ibid., 279.

CHAPTER 4

1. As Rader judiciously comments, "This human interchange with nature is a permanent part of the base. The base thus includes the natural

environment and the human hereditary endowment." Melvin Rader, *Marx's Interpretation of History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), 19.

2. Hegel, similarly, perceives this necessary dialectical interaction as a process in which a human being "humanizes his environment." Georg W. F. Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), 256.
3. Karl Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy* (New York: International Publishers, 1976), 165–166.
4. Karl Marx, *Capital,* Vol. 1 (New York: International Publishers, 1996), 577.
5. Karl Marx, *Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy* (New York: International Publishers, 1986), 28:95.
6. This thesis is explicitly rejected by Allen Wood, *Karl Marx,* 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2004), 7, 44. My exposition later in text agrees with Mészáros and Lenin: "What is vitally important . . . is the fact that 'the basic idea of Marx's entire system'—'the concept of the social relations of production'—is precisely his concept of alienation . . . as Lenin correctly recognized it." István Mészáros, *Marx's Theory of Alienation* (London: Merlin Press, 2005), 94. This obvious connection, to my knowledge, has not been sufficiently developed.
7. The following sections owe much to the works of Bertell Ollman, *Alienation: Marx's Conception of Man in Capitalist Society*, 2nd ed. (London: Cambridge University Press), 1976; Mészáros, *Marx's Theory of Alienation;* and Erich Fromm, *Marx's Concept of Man* (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1961). Another work worthy of mention here is Raya Dunayevskaya, *Marxism and Freedom* (London: Pluto Press, 1971). This work is very useful from the vantage point of the present inquiry, for elucidating the dialectic of Marx's humanism, especially in *Capital.*
8. Ollman, *Alienation,* 136.
9. This quotation is from, Ibid., 302, fn. 1. Ollman's reasoning for not having a prioritized beginning point is briefly offered in Ibid., 266. For a reasonable critique of Ollman on these issues, see Kevin M. Brien, *Marx, Reason, and the Art of Freedom,* 2nd Edition (Amherst: Humanity Books, 2005), 28–29.
10. Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844* (New York: International Publishers, 1975), 336.
11. For "suffering," Marx often uses the German word *laiden.* The dictionary definition of *laiden* (suffer, bear, endure, undergo, and passion) is insufficient in capturing different, sometimes dual, meanings intended by Marx. In understanding the word, we will rely on the context in which it appears. Interestingly, this important philosophical concept has received little attention. Even though Venable's *Human Nature: The Marxian View* contains two chapters entitled "Suffering I: Classes" and "Suffering II: Division of Labour," the meaning of the concept and its relationship to alienation are not discussed at all. Instead, Venable emphasizes the misguided claim that, for Marx, human nature is merely determined by the material conditions. If human nature is determined in this way, then why would humankind suffer in a class society?

12. Marx, *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844,* 300.
13. Marx, *Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy,* 28:530.
14. Ibid.
15. Karl Marx, "Comments on James Mill, *Élémens D'Économie Politique*" (New York: International Publishers, 1975), 3:228.
16. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844,* 274.
17. Ibid., 276.
18. Leszek Kolakowski usefully sums up the difference for us:

> It is important to note, in Marx's early criticism of Hegel, that he did not at any time identify alienation with externalization, i.e. the labour process whereby human strength and skill are converted into new products. It would clearly be absurd to speak of abolishing alienation in the sense, since in all imaginable circumstances men will have to expand energy to produce the things they need. Hegel . . . did identify alienation with externalization, and he could therefore only conceive man's final reconciliation with the world by way of abolishing the objectivity of the object. To Marx, however, the fact that people "objectivize" their powers does not mean they become the poorer by whatever they produce; on the contrary, labour in itself is an affirmation and not a denial of humanity, being the chief form of the unending process of man's self-creation. It is only in a society ruled by private property and the division of labour that productivity is a source of misery and dehumanization, and labour destroys the workman instead of enriching him. When alienated labour is done away with, people will continue to externalize and "objectivize" their powers, but they will be able to assimilate the work of their hands as an expression of their collective ability.

 Leszek Kolakowski, *Main Currents of Marxism: The Founders,* Vol. 1 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), 266.
19. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844,* 274.
20. Ibid., 333–334. Sayers, however, thinks that this is somewhat exaggerated by Marx and that Hegel is able to adopt a critical standpoint with respect to labor. Sean Sayers, *Marx & Alienation: Essays on Hegelian Themes* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 26–29.
21. Marx, *Capital,* Vol. 1, 177.
22. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (New York: International Publishers, 1976), 487.
23. Karl Marx, "Draft of an Article on List's Book *Das Nationale System Der Politischen Oekonomie*" (New York: International Publishers, 1975), 4:286.
24. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844,* 284.
25. Marx, *Capital,* Vol. 1, 179.
26. Ibid., 577.
27. Ibid., 361. As *The Communist Manifesto* also states, this condition results in the formation of "autocratic power," which allows the capitalist to act like a "private legislator" with no respect to otherwise esteemed "division

of responsibility" and the "representative system." Marx and Engels, *The Communist Manifesto,* 487.

28. Marx, *Capital,* Vol. 1, 577.
29. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844,* 272. Mészáros rightly calls this form of alienation the alienation of humans "from nature." Mészáros, *Marx's Theory of Alienation,* 14.
30. Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology,* 93.
31. Marx, *Capital,* Vol. 1, 54, fn. 2. (Italics are mine.)
32. Ibid.
33. Karl Marx, "Notes on Wagner's" (New York: International Publishers, 1989), 24:551–552.
34. Marx reiterates this point in *Capital* declaring value the "common substance" of exchange and "human labour" the common substance, and hence the essence, of value. Tellingly, he notes of products, "human labour power has been expended in their production, that human labour is embodied in them. When looked at as crystals of this social substance, common to them all, they are—Values." Marx, *Capital,* Vol. 1, 48. Or, later on, Marx says the same thing when he considers why Aristotle could not see this point: "Aristotle therefore, himself, tells us what barred the way to his further analysis; it was the absence of any concept of value. What is that equal something, that common substance, which admits of the value of the beds being expressed by a house? Such a thing, in truth, cannot exist, says Aristotle. And why not? Compared with the beds, the house does represent something equal to them, in so far as it represents what is really equal, both in the beds and the house. And that is—human labour." Ibid., 70. Elsewhere he says, "The purely natural material, in so far as *no* human labour is objectified in it, in so far as it is thus merely matter, exists independently of human labour, has no *value,* since value is only objectified labour . . . " Marx, *Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy,* 28:290.
35. Marx, *Capital,* Vol. 1, 51.
36. Ibid., 52.
37. Ibid.
38. Ibid., 54.
39. Ibid.
40. Ibid., 49.
41. Ibid.
42. Ibid., 82–83. We must use this occasion to highlight in passim a surprising aspect of Marx's materialism:

> The value of commodities is the very opposite of the coarse materiality of their substance, not an atom of matter enters into its composition. Turn and examine a single commodity, by itself, as we will, yet in so far as it remains an object of value, it seems impossible to grasp it. If, however, we bear in mind that the value of commodities has a purely social reality, and that they acquire this reality only in so far as they are expressions or embodiments of one identical social substance, viz., human

labour, it follows as a matter of course, that value can only manifest itself in the social relation of commodity to commodity.

Ibid., 57.

43. Ibid., 83–85.
44. Marx, *Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy,* 28:93.
45. Ibid., 94.
46. Ibid., 94–95.
47. Marx, *Capital,* Vol. 1, 50–51.
48. Marx, *Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy,* 28:198.
49. Marx, *Capital,* Vol. 1, 51.
50. The previous chapter had quoted Marx saying that an unused, unconsumed railway is not a real railway, or is one only potentially. Marx, "Introduction" to *Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy,* 28:28.
51. Marx, *Capital,* Vol. 1, 50–51.
52. We shall ignore here the fact that not all of the value is converted into capital.
53. Marx, *Capital,* Vol. 1, 241.
54. Marx, *Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy,* 28:289.
55. This is also the basis of bourgeois justice, which we shall cover in Chapter 5.
56. Marx, *Capital,* Vol. 1, 567.
57. Ibid., 572.
58. Ibid., 567–568.
59. Marx, *Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy,* 28:390.
60. Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy,* 34:122. Following Marx, we are here assuming a "normal" process of accumulation in a smoothly functioning production and exchange process. Moreover, we are also overlooking the fragmentation of the surplus value, which further contributes to fetishism: "the process of accumulation is obscured by the incident of the circulation which brings it about, and by the splitting up of surplus-value," or breaking it up into "fragments." Marx, *Capital,* Vol. 1, 565.
61. Marx, *Capital,* Vol. 1, 375, fn. 2.
62. Ibid., 314–315.
63. Ibid., 411–412.
64. Ibid., 478.
65. Ibid., 490.
66. Ibid.
67. Ibid., 474.
68. Marx quotes these lines from Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice,* in a footnote. Ibid., 490.
69. Marx and Engels, *The Communist Manifesto,* 491.
70. Ibid., 501.
71. Marx, *Capital,* Vol. 1, 487.
72. Ibid., 488.
73. Ibid., 490.

74. Marx and Engels, *The Communist Manifesto,* 499.
75. Ibid., 490–491.
76. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844,* 308.
77. Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology,* 438–439.
78. Marx and Engels, *The Holy Family,* 36.
79. Marx, *Capital,* Vol. 1, 577.
80. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844,* 278–279.
81. Ibid., 277.
82. Marx, *Capital,* Vol. 1, 570–571.
83. Ibid., 276.
84. Ibid., 277.
85. Ibid.
86. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844,* 317. Though it is not our aim to pursue it here fully, this thought calls into mind one of Kant's categorical imperatives, which says, "Act in such a way that you treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of another, always at the same time as an end and never simply as a means." Immanuel Kant, *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1981), 36. What is strikingly similar between this imperative and Marx's notion of the alienation of humans from their species being is not only the treatment of other human beings "merely as a means" but also the understanding of both Marx and Kant that humanity is also contained in the person of each individual, as much as each individual is a part of humanity.
87. Marx says,

 > Under private property . . . every person speculates on creating a *new* need in another, so as to drive him to fresh sacrifice, to place him in a new dependence and to seduce him into a new mode of *enjoyment* and therefore economic ruin. Each tries to establish over the other an *alien* power, so as thereby to find satisfaction of his own selfish need. The increase in the quantity of objects is therefore accompanied by an extension of the realm of the alien powers to which man is subjected, and every new product represents a new *potentiality* of mutual swindling and mutual plundering. Man becomes ever poorer as man . . .

 Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844,* 306.
88. Marx, *Capital,* Vol. 1, 52.
89. Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology,* 409–410.
90. Marx, *Capital,* Vol. 1, 186.
91. Karl Marx, "Marx to Laura and Paul Lafargue," February 15, 1869 (New York: International Publishers, 1988), 43:217.
92. Marx, *Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy,* 28:99.
93. Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology,* 432.
94. Marx, *Capital,* Vol. 1, 331.
95. Marx, "Introduction" to *Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy,* 28:18. The original text reads "*zoon politikon*" in Greek letters.
96. Marx, *Capital,* Vol. 1, 335–337.

97. Ibid.
98. Ibid., 330.
99. Ibid., 334.
100. Ibid., 336–337.
101. Ibid., 338.
102. Kolakowski, *Main Currents of Marxism,* 286.
103. Marx, *Capital,* Vol. 3, 805–806.

CHAPTER 5

1. According to Marx, "*inversion* (*Verkehrung*)" is a mental process,

> by which the sensibly-concrete counts only as the form of appearance of the abstractly general and not, on the contrary, the abstractly general as property of the concrete . . . If I say: Roman Law and German Law are both laws, that is obvious. But if I say: Law (Das Recht), this abstraction (Abstraktum) *realises itself* in Roman Law and in German Law, in these concrete laws, the interconnection (becomes) mystical.

Marx, "The Value-Form," Appendix to the 1st German Edition of *Capital,* Vol. 1, 1867. From this inversion arises "the illusion that law is based on the will, and indeed on the will divorced from its real basis—on free will. Similarly, justice is in its turn reduced to the actual laws." Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The German Ideology* (New York: International Publishers, 1976), 90. Inversion, then, is a form of ideology: "If in all ideology men and their relations appear upside-down as in a *camera obscura,* this phenomenon arises just as much from their historical life-process as the inversion of objects on the retina does from their physical life-process." Ibid., 36. Marx clearly links ideological inversions to alienation. Cf. Karl Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right: Introduction,* 175.
2. Karl Marx, "Preface" to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* (New York: International Publishers, 1987), 29:262.
3. Karl Marx, "Debates on the Law on Thefts of Wood," Proceedings of the Sixth Rhine Province Assembly: Third Article (New York: International Publishers, 1975), 1:224–263.
4. Marx, "Preface" to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, 262.
5. Marx, *Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law. Introduction,* 176.
6. Karl Marx, **"**Moralising Criticism and Critical Morality: A Contribution to German Cultural History Contra Karl Heinzen" (New York: International Publishers, 1976), 6:317.
7. In recent decades, Marx's approach to justice has received much attention. The central question guiding this debate is related to a key question this chapter seeks to answer. More than how Marx explains justice in bourgeois society, the participants in this debate have been mainly concerned

with whether Marx thought capitalist relations were just or unjust in the moral sense. Within the existing literature on the nature of Marx's criticism of capitalism, every possible conclusion is available, including the following: he thought it was just, unjust, both just and unjust, neither just nor unjust, just or unjust for one reason and not another, condemnable, not condemnable, condemnable but not on the basis of morality, and so on. It is not my aim to evaluate the entire literature, though it is worth pointing out in passim here that the multiplicity of conclusions, all of which find partial basis in Marx's writings, results from insufficient attention to his dialectic method. For a useful outline of various positions, including his own, see Steven Lukes, *Marxism and Morality* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985). One of the most comprehensive assessments of this debate is offered by Rodney G. Peffer, *Marxism, Morality, and Social Justice* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990). Peffer takes the side of the camp that finds morality in Marx's thought. However, Peffer, on the whole, follows the analytical Marxists, such as Cohen, Roemer, and Elster, and remains committed only to the normative positions available in Marx. He attempts to reject, haphazardly, the importance of dialectical method of Marx, though he does not make clear whether he thinks Marx lacks a systematic dialectical outlook, or whether dialectics as a method in general is unsustainable, or both (see, especially, 17–19). Thus, as distinct from my approach, he offers a Marxist theory of justice, whereas my concern is with the correct and adequate interpretation of Marx, which is not possible without due attention to his dialectical method.

8. Allen W. Wood, "The Marxian Critique of Justice," in Marshall Cohen, Thomas Nagel, and Thomas Scanlon (eds.), *Marx, Justice, and History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 5.
9. Ibid., 36.
10. Allen W. Wood, *Karl Marx,* 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2004), 44.
11. Wood, "The Marxian Critique of Justice," 18. Following this line of thought, John Kane writes, "Marx offered a relativist-functionalist account of justice, which matched moral beliefs to prevailing productive relations." John Kane, "The End of Morality? Theory, Practice, and the 'Realistic Outlook' of Karl Marx," in Ian Shapiro and Judith Wagner Decew (eds.), *Theory and Practice: Nomos XXXVII* (New York: NYU Press, 1995), 424.
12. Wood, *Karl Marx,* 225.
13. For a useful explanation of five different ways in which the concept of justice is understood, see John S. Mill, "Utilitarianism," in John Gray (ed.), *On Liberty and Other Essays* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 178–180.
14. Wood, "The Marxian Critique of Justice," 37–40.
15. Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. 1 (New York: International Publishers, 1996), 639–640.
16. As he argues, the Wood thesis "makes it impossible for the oppressed to criticize the injustice of their life situations, but Marxian sociology of morals

makes such criticism possible and comprehensible." Ziyad I. Husami, "Marx on Distributive Justice," in Marshall Cohen, Thomas Nagel, and Thomas Scanlon (eds.), *Marx, Justice, and History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 52.

17. Allen W. Wood, "Marx on Right and Justice: A Reply to Husami," in Marshall Cohen, Thomas Nagel, and Thomas Scanlon (eds.), *Marx, Justice, and History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 120.
18. Ibid., 106, 122. He repeats this argument also in his book *Karl Marx*.
19. Ibid., 120. With this point, Wood partially agrees with George G. Brenkert, who says, "it is upon the basis of freedom, not distributive justice, that Marx condemns capitalism and bourgeois society." George G. Brenkert, *Marx's Ethics of Freedom* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1983), xi. See also his "Freedom and Private Property in Marx," in Marshall Cohen, Thomas Nagel, and Thomas Scanlon (eds.), *Marx, Justice, and History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 80–105. Among others, Lukes also offers a version of this claim: Marx made the morality of freedom and emancipation "his own" and disregarded the concept of Recht as "anachronistic." Lukes*, Marxism and Morality,* 29.
20. Wood, "Marx on Right and Justice: A Reply to Husami," 121–122.
21. Ibid., 21.
22. Wood, "The Marxian Critique of Justice," 21–22.
23. Karl Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy* (New York: International Publishers, 1976), 197.
24. Gerald A. Cohen, "Review of Wood's *Karl Marx*," *Mind* 92, no. 367 (1983): 443.
25. G. A. Cohen, "The Labor Theory of Value and the Concept of Exploitation," in Marshall Cohen, Thomas Nagel, and Thomas Scanlon (eds.), *Marx, Justice, and History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 138.
26. Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy*, 197.
27. Karl Popper, *The Open Society and Its Enemies: Hegel and Marx,* Vol. 2, 7th ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 227. According to Popper, Marx employed moral standards in his critique of capitalism. Ibid.
28. Marx, *Capital,* Vol. 1, 204.
29. Eduard Bernstein, *Selected Writings*, *1900–1921* (Atlantic Highlands: Humanities Press, 1996), 91. Engels is also held responsible for this mistake. However, he clearly says, like Marx, that this transaction is "by no means an injustice to the seller," only "according to the laws of exchange of commodities." Frederick Engels, *Anti-Duhring* (New York: International Publishers, 1987), 25:190.
30. Marx, *Capital,* Vol. 1, 204.
31. Ibid., 202.
32. Husami, "Marx on Distributive Justice," 69.
33. I borrowed this quotation from Lukes, *Marxism and* Morality, 49. Marx and Engels Collected Works, International Publishers edition, translates

this differently: instead of "improper way," it reads "unwarranted manner." This passage comes form Karl Marx, "Marginal Notes on Adolph Wagner's *Lehrbuch der politischen Oekonomie*" (New York: International Publishers, 1989), 24:558.

34. It is rather odd, in light of the following passage, that N. Scott Arnold makes the following claim: "It is an article of faith among most socialists, and nearly all Marxists . . . that the laborer and only laborer contributes" to production. This, according to him, "includes Marx" also. N. Scott Arnold, *Marx's Radical Critique of Capitalist Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 117.
35. Marx, "Marginal Notes on Adolph Wagner's *Lehrbuch der politischen Oekonomie*," 535.
36. Ibid., 535–536.
37. Marx, *Capital,* Vol. 3, 338.
38. Ibid., 337–338.
39. Loyd David Easton, in Kurt H. Guddat (eds.), "Introduction," *Writings of the Young Marx on Philosophy and Society* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1997), 29–30.
40. Jon Elster, *Making Sense of Marx* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 118.
41. Karl Marx, "Letter to Otechestvenniye Zapiski" (New York: International Publishers, 1989), 24:196–201.
42. Karl Marx, "The British Rule in India" (New York: International Publishers, 1979), 12:132.
43. Ibid.
44. For this type of positive statement regarding slavery, see Karl Marx, "Letter from Marx to Pavel Vasilyevich Annenkov," December 28, 1846 (New York: International Publishers, 1982), 38: 95–106.
45. See his letter to Abraham Lincoln, in Karl Marx, "To Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States of America" (New York: International Publishers, 1985), 20:19–21; also, Karl Marx, "Elections—Financial Clouds—The Duchess of Sutherland and Slavery" (New York: International Publishers, 1979), 11:486–494.
46. Karl Marx, *On the Jewish Question* (New York: International Publishers, 1975), 162.
47. Ibid., 162–163.
48. Ibid., 164.
49. This becomes especially clear in Marx's solution to alienation:

> Only when the real, individual man re-absorbs in himself the abstract citizen, and as an individual human being has become a *species-being* in his everyday life, in his particular work, and in his particular situation, only when man has recognized and organized his 'own powers' as *social* powers, and, consequently, no longer separates social power

> from himself in the shape of *political* power, only then will human emancipation have been accomplished.
>
> Ibid., 168.

50. Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology*, 90.
51. For a valuable discussion of this connection, see Evgeny B. Pashukanis, *Law and Marxism: A General Theory* (London: Ink Link, 1978).
52. Karl Marx, "The Value-Form," Appendix to the 1st German Edition of Capital, Vol. 1, 1867. Source: http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1867-c1/appendix.htm
53. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. 1, 178.
54. John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1980), Bk. 5.
55. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. 1, 186.
56. Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* (New York: International Publishers, 1991), 29:474–475.
57. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. 1, 573.
58. Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, 30:105–106.
59. Karl Marx, *Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy* (New York: International Publishers, 1986), 28:196.
60. Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, 30:106.
61. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. 1, 582–583. This passage also informs the question of structural determinism. It demonstrates that rigid determinism cannot be accommodated by Marx's dialectical method.
62. Marx, Outlines *of the Critique of Political Economy*, 28:386.
63. Ibid., 392.
64. Marx, *Capital,* Vol. 1, 186.
65. Marx, *Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy*, 29:91.
66. Ibid., 28:390.
67. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. 1, 588–590. Note also how the culprit is the capitalist, and not capital—exploitation of persons by persons.
68. Ibid., 705.
69. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. 3, 806. Here he speaks of capital, but one must assume that he is referring to the class of capitalists since it is absurd to think that capital can enter into a "contractual agreement," and since he tells us in the same text that the capitalists become the "trustees" of the "bourgeois society" and "pocket all the proceeds of this trusteeship." Ibid., 265.
70. Karl Marx, "On Proudhon" (New York: International Publishers, 1985), 20:28. I will discuss Marx's criticism of Proudhon in more detail in the next chapter.
71. Karl Marx, *Critique of the Gotha Program* (New York: International Publishers, 1989), 86–87.
72. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. 1, 750.
73. Ibid., 639.
74. Marx, *Critique of the Gotha Program,* 92.
75. Ibid.

76. Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* (New York: International Publishers, 1975), 280.
77. Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology*, 195.
78. Immanuel Kant, *The Metaphysical Elements of Justice* (New York: Macmillan, 1965), 15.
79. Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology*, 195. The same criticism is extended to include the liberal theory of rights in the same context.
80. Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, 33:386.
81. Richard W. Miller, *Analyzing* Marx*: Morality, Power and History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 76–97.
82. Miller says a moral theory necessarily involves the following:

> *Equality.* People are to be shown equal concern or respect or afforded equal status . . . 2. *General norms.* The right resolution of any major political issue would result from applying valid general norms to the specific facts of the case at hand. These rules are valid in all societies . . . 3. *Universality.* Anyone who rationally reflects on relevant facts and arguments will accept these rules, if he or she has the normal range of emotion . . .
>
> Ibid., 17.

83. Kant, *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1981), 1.
84. See Peffer, *Marxism, Morality, and Social Justice*, for a critique of the equation of all morality with Kant's version (170), and a general critique of "Marxist Anti-Moralism" (Chapter 4). But the more interesting point Peffer makes in his book is that some of the key components of Kant's moral philosophy, such as dignity and autonomy, were also harbored by Marx.
85. Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology*, 342–343.
86. Ibid,. 419.
87. Marx, "Moralising Criticism and Critical Morality," 317.
88. Ibid., 317–318.
89. Karl Marx, "Speech at the Anniversary of the *People's Paper*" (New York: International Publishers, 1980), 14:655.
90. Marx, "Moralising Criticism and Critical Morality," 318–319.
91. Ibid., 319.
92. Jean Jacques Rousseau, "Discourse on the Origin and the Foundation of Inequality Among Men," in Victor Gourevitch (ed.), *The Discourses and Other Early Writings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 173.
93. Marx, "Moralising Criticism and Critical Morality," 319.
94. Marx, "On Proudhon," 29.
95. Ibid., 33.
96. Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy*, 167, 178.
97. Marx, "On Proudhon," 28.
98. Cf. Marx, "Marginal Notes on Wagner," 544.
99. Marx, "On Proudhon," 29.

100. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (New York: International Publishers, 1976), 513.
101. Marx, "On Proudhon," 30.
102. Lukes, *Marxism and Morality*, 26.
103. Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy*, 176–177.
104. Karl Kautsky, in his *Ethics and the Materialist Conception of History* (Chicago: Charles H. Kerr, 1907), attempts to provide a Darwinian, naturalist ethical basis for Marxism. Kautsky claims that some instincts and needs are "deeply grounded in human nature, the nature of man as a social animal . . . " (178). The satisfaction of these needs is a matter of species survival, the support of which constitutes the basis of his ethics. According to Kautsky, "Among species of animals in whom the social animal becomes a weapon in the struggle for life, this encourages consequently social impulses in many species and many individuals grow to an extraordinary strength, so that they can overcome the impulse of self-preservation . . . " (94–95). Kautsky's fascination with Darwinism must have been widespread enough to provoke the following opposition from the Italian Marxist Antonio Labriola: "*Darwinism, political and social* . . . has, like an epidemic, for many years invaded the mind of more than one thinker, and many more of the advocates and declaimers of sociology." Cited in Plekhanov, *Fundamental Problems of Marxism* (New York: International Publishers, 1969), 112.
105. Karl Marx, "Marx to Engels," December 19, 1860 (New York: International Publishers, 1985), 41:232.
106. Karl Marx, "Marx to Lassalle," January 16, 1861 (New York: International Publishers, 1985), 41:246.
107. Karl Marx, "Marx to Engels," June 18, 1862 (New York: International Publishers, 1985), 41:381.
108. Karl Marx, "Marx to Laura and Paul Lafargue," February 15, 1869 (New York: International Publishers, 1988), 43:217.
109. According to Miller, Marx clearly "accepts the charge that Communism . . . abolishes . . . all morality, instead of constituting [it] on a new basis." Miller, *Analyzing Marx*, 15. Miller's evidence mainly comes from *The Communist Manifesto*, which does not so "clearly" endorse this point, as he claims. Philip J. Kain argues that the abolition-of-morality thesis was advocated by Marx only during the years extending from 1845 to 1856. He says that Marx's historical materialism during this time period "leaves no room for moral responsibility and moral obligation. Morality becomes ideology and it will disappear in communist society." Philip J. Kain, *Marx and Ethics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 83. This too is a false interpretation.
110. Marx and Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, 504.
111. Ibid., 498.
112. Ibid., 501.
113. Ibid., 504.

114. Ibid., 498.
115. Ibid.
116. Ibid.
117. Ibid., 499.
118. Ibid.
119. It has been suggested before that Marx, in *The Communist Manifesto*, abandons the concept of alienation as *human suffering*. The basis for this suggestion comes from a passage where Marx is critical of "Critical-Utopian Socialism and Communism." The passage in question, however, is critical of this doctrine for considering the interests of the proletariat "Only from the view point of being the most suffering class . . . " and not recognizing also the significance of "class antagonisms." They, therefore, "endeavor . . . to deaden the class struggle and to reconcile the class antagonisms." Ibid., 515–516.
120. Max Horkheimer, *Critical Theory: Selected Essays* (New York: Continuum, 1992), 233, and throughout.
121. Ibid., 246.
122. Max Horkheimer, *Between Philosophy and Social Science* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1993), 21.
123. Horkheimer, *Critical Theory*, 210.
124. Herbert Marcuse, *Negations: Essays in Critical Theory* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968), 72.
125. As Horkheimer explains, "For all its insight into the individual steps in social change and for all the agreement of its elements with the most advanced traditional theories, the critical theory has no specific influence on its side, except concern for the abolition of social injustice. This negative formulation . . . is the materialist content of the idealist concept of reason." Accordingly, "The future of humanity depends on the existence today of the critical attitude, which of course contains within it elements from traditional theories and from our declining culture generally." Horkeimer, *Critical Theory*, 242. A somewhat more active role for humankind, however, is also suggested by Horkheimer: the achievement of a "rational society," defined primarily and vaguely as one in which *human* "happiness" is achieved, "depends on historical conflicts. The truth about the future does not take the form of a verification of data which differ from other only in having some special importance. Rather, man's own will plays a part in that truth." Ibid., 251.
126. I hope to develop these views further in a subsequent volume.

CHAPTER 6

1. See Peter B. Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol (eds.), *Bringing the State Back In* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985). For a very sophisticated reconstruction of the Marxist state theory, see Nicos Poulantzas, *State, Power, Socialism* (London: NLB, 1978) and Nicos

Poulantzas, *Political Power and Social Classes* (London: NLB, 1973). Along similar, impressive lines, see also Bob Jessop, *The Capitalist State* (New York: New York University Press, 1982). For the most elaborate resource that accounts for Marx's and Engels's comments on the state, see Hal Draper, *Karl Marx's Theory of Revolution: Volume 1: State and Bureaucracy* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1977). For a brilliant survey of Marx's and Engels's writings on the state, as well as the Marxist literature on the state, see Axel van den Berg, *The Immanent Utopia: From Marxism on the State to the State of Marxism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988).

2. Engels explains in a letter to Bloch that Marx and he were somewhat responsible for the development of the rigid economic-determinist view. But they also had some valid reasons: "If some younger writers attribute more importance to the economic aspect than is its due, Marx and I are to some extent to blame. We had to stress this leading principle in the face of opponents who denied it, and we did not always have the time, space and opportunity to do justice to the other factors that interacted upon each other." Nevertheless, Engels thought the rigidly structural-deterministic application of Marx's and his method by the "young" German Social Democrats amounted to an "absurdity." Stressing this economic principle did not prevent Marx from also highlighting the autonomy, which he often called the "independence," of the state and political power. As Engels points out,

> *"Eighteenth Brumaire* by Marx . . . almost exclusively concerns itself with the *special* role that political struggles and events play . . . Or *Capital,* e.g., the section on the working day, where legislation, which after all is a political act operates so incisively. Or the section on the history of the bourgeoisie (Chapter 24 [26–32 in English]). Or why then do we fight for the political dictatorship of the proletariat, if political power is economically powerless?"

 Frederick Engels, "Engels to Joseph Bloch," September 21–22, 1890 (New York: International Publishers, 2001), 49:34–36.
3. Karl Marx, *Critique of the Gotha Program* (New York: International Publishers, 1989), 94.
4. Ibid.
5. Karl Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (New York: International Publishers, 1979), 11:185.
6. Ibid., 186.
7. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (New York: International Publishers, 1976), 488–489.
8. Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire,* 186.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid., 186.
11. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The German Ideology* (New York: International Publishers, 1976), 211.
12. Ibid., 493.

13. Karl Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy* (New York: International Publishers, 1976), 212.
14. Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire,* 182.
15. Ibid., 186.
16. Ibid., 187.
17. Ibid., 187–188.
18. Karl Marx, "Moralising Criticism and Critical Morality: A Contribution to German Cultural History Contra Karl Heinzen" (New York: International Publishers, 1976), 324.
19. For a more elaborate discussion, see Mehmet Tabak, "Marx's Theory of Proletarian Dictatorship Revisited," *Science & Society* 64, no. 3 (2000), 333–356.
20. Karl Marx, First Draft of *The Civil War in France* (New York: International Publishers, 1986), 22:483–484.
21. Ibid., 484.
22. Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology,* 195.
23. For an excellent discussion of the Marx-Weber connection on the state and power, see Derek Sayer, *Capitalism and Modernity: An Excursus on Marx and Weber* (London: Routledge, 1990).
24. Karl Marx, *Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law* (New York: International Publishers, 1975), 3:46–47.
25. Ibid., 47–48.
26. Ibid., 64. In this deduction, "Hegel is not to be blamed for depicting the nature of the modern state as it is, but for presenting that which is as the *nature* [*essence*] *of the state.*" Ibid., 63.
27. Ibid., 41.
28. Marx, *Capital,* Vol. 1 (New York: International Publishers, 1996), 723.
29. Karl Marx, *Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy* (New York: International Publishers, 1986), 28:431.
30. Marx, *Capital,* Vol. 1, 276–277.
31. Ibid., 713–714.
32. Marx and Engels, *The Communist Manifesto,* 486. His interpreters, including many Marxists, often focus only on the last sentence, which suggests the tool-state theory. Indeed, as Hal Draper notes, this sentence is often misquoted as saying, "the state is the executive committee of the ruling class." Marx clearly says something different in this context. Draper, *Karl Marx's Theory of Revolution,* 258.
33. Marx, "Moralising Criticism and Critical Morality," 323.
34. Jon Elster, *Making Sense of Marx* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 409.
35. Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology,* 90.
36. Karl Marx, "Bastiat and Carey" (New York: International Publishers, 1986), 28:6.
37. Ibid., 7.
38. Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology,* 90.

39. Ibid.
40. Marx, *Capital,* Vol. 1, 582–583.
41. Poulantzas, *State, Power, Socialism,* 17–19.
42. Ibid., 26–27.
43. Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology,* 195.
44. Ibid., 90.
45. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, "Review of *Le socialisme et l'impôt,* by Emile de Girardin" (New York: International Publishers, 1978), 10:333.
46. Marx often makes such statements throughout his works to emphasize an attribute of something ignored by his opponents. The broader context in which such statements are employed reveals that nothing, in Marx's dialectical thought, is simply one of its attributes. See Chapter 3 of the present work for an elaborate defense of this claim.
47. Karl Marx, *The Class Struggles in France* (New York: International Publishers, 1978), 10:48.
48. Marx, *Capital,* Vol. 1, 713–714.
49. Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology,* 90.
50. Ibid.
51. Marx, *The Class Struggles in France,* 49.
52. Marx, *Capital,* Vol. 3, 870–871.
53. Ibid., 871.
54. Marx, *Capital,* Vol. 1, 276.
55. Ibid., Vol. 3, 779–780.
56. Ibid., 867.
57. But, as Lukács maintains, "such a 'law' would have to be the 'unconscious' product of the activity of the different commodity owners acting independently of one another (because of competition, calculation of profit motives, and exploitation M.T.), i.e. a law of mutually interacting 'coincidences' rather than one of truly rational organization." In the latter scenario, capitalism would seize to exist. Georg Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectics* (Cambridge: The MIT University Press, 1997), 102.
58. Marx, *Capital,* Vol. 1, 275–276.
59. Ibid., 275–76, fn. 1.
60. Marx and Engels, *The Communist Manifesto,* 493.
61. Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy*, 212.
62. Paul Thomas, *Alien Politics: Marxist State Theory Retrieved* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 24. Our exposition later in text also coincides with Derek Sayer's view, expressed in "The Critique of Politics and Political Economy: Capitalism, Communism, and the State in Marx's Writings of the Mid-1840s," *The Sociological Review* 33, no. 2 (1985): 239.
63. Karl Marx, *On the Jewish Question* (New York: International Publishers, 1975), 3:152.
64. Ibid., 153. According to Marx, Hegel "defines the relation of the political state to religion quite correctly when he says:"

> In order [. . .] that the state should come into existence as the self-knowing, moral reality of the mind, its distraction from the form of authority and faith is essential. But this distinction emerges only insofar as the ecclesiastical aspect arrives at a separation within itself. It is only in this way that the state, above the particular churches, has achieved and brought into existence universality of thought, which is the principle of its form.
>
> Ibid.

65. Ibid., 153–155.
66. Ibid., 159.
67. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The Holy Family* (New York: International Publishers), 1975, 113.
68. Ibid., 122.
69. Ibid., 123–124.
70. Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology*, 46–48.
71. Ibid., 46–47.
72. Ibid., 47.
73. Ibid., 90.
74. Ibid.
75. Karl Marx, "Speech at the Trial of the Rhenish District Committee of Democrats" (New York: International Publishers, 1977), 8:327.

EPILOGUE: MISSING PARTS OF THE ORGANIC WHOLE

1. Melvin Rader, *Marx's Interpretation of History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), 58. Often, the word "element" is used by scholars to describe the parts of the system. Marx occasionally uses it himself. The more proper term to use in this context is "moment."
2. Ibid., 56. Here, Rader has in mind the reduction of the superstructure to the structure of society.
3. Karl Marx, *Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy* (New York: International Publishers, 1986), 28:341–342.
4. Bertell Ollman, *Dance of the Dialectic: Steps in Marx's Method* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2003), 17.
5. Ibid.
6. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The German Ideology* (New York: International Publishers, 1976), 47.
7. Karl Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy* (New York: International Publishers, 1976), 176–177.

Bibliography

All of the Marx and Engels works used throughout this book, except for one, are from *Karl Marx, Frederick Engels Collected Works* (*MECW*), published by International Publishers. The particular volume in which the referenced work appears is indicated at the end of each bibliographical entry below. The exception is Marx's "Value-Form," written as an appendix to the First German edition of the first volume of *Capital,* which has a website source (the reasons for this aberration are not significant at all). Some of Marx's unpublished works were published with different titles. *Grundrisse* and *Theories of Surplus Value* are among them. These works are referred to as *Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy* and *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy,* respectively, extending from volume 28 to 34. More specifically, these seven volumes cover the first two drafts of *Capital. Outlines* and the "Introduction" to them, which is the first draft of *Capital,* are included in volumes 28 and a large portion of volume 29. The second part of volume 29 consists of *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy,* Part One. Volumes 30–34 contain the rest of this work, including *Theories of Surplus Value*.

Works Coauthored by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels (Engels's own works are under "Other Works")

Marx, Karl and Frederick Engels. "Review of Le socialisme et l'impôt, by Emile de Girardin." New York: International Publishers, 1978. *MECW,* Vol. 10.

——— "Preface to the 1872 German Edition of the Manifesto." New York: International Publishers, 1988. *MECW,* Vol. 23.

——— *The Communist Manifesto.* New York: International Publishers, 1976. *MECW,* Vol. 6.

——— *The German Ideology.* New York: International Publishers, 1976. *MECW,* Vol. 5.

——— *The Holy Family.* New York: International Publishers, 1975. *MECW,* Vol. 4.

Works by Karl Marx

Marx, Karl. "Afterword to the Second German Edition." *Capital,* Vol. 1. New York: International Publishers, 1996. *MECW,* Vol. 35.

——— "Bastiat and Carey." New York: International Publishers, 1986. *MECW,* Vol. 28.
——— "Comments on James Mill, Élémens D'Économie Politique." New York: International Publishers, 1975. *MECW,* Vol. 3.
——— "Debates on the Law on Thefts of Wood." *Proceedings of the Sixth Rhine Province Assembly: Third Article.* New York: International Publishers, 1975. *MECW,* Vol. 1.
——— "Draft of an Article on Friedrich List's Book: Das Nationale System der Politischen Oekonomie." New York: International Publishers, 1975. *MECW,* Vol. 4.
——— "Elections—Financial Clouds—The Duchess of Sutherland and Slavery." New York: International Publishers, 1979. *MECW,* Vol. 11.
——— "Introduction." to *Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy.* New York: International Publishers, 1986. *MECW,* Vol. 28.
——— "Letter to Otechestvenniye Zapiski." New York: International Publishers, 1989. *MECW*, Vol. 24.
——— "Marginal Notes on Wagner's Lehrbuch der politischen Oekonomie." New York: International Publishers, 1989. *MECW*, Vol. 24.
——— "Marx to Bolte." November 23, 1971. New York: International Publishers, 1989. *MECW*, Vol. 44.
——— "Marx to Engels." June 18, 1862. New York: International Publishers, 1985. *MECW*, Vol. 41.
——— "Marx to Engels." December 19, 1860. New York: International Publishers, 1985. *MECW*, Vol. 41.
——— "Marx to Engels." July 31, 1865. New York: International Publishers, 1987. *MECW*, Vol. 42.
——— "Marx to Kugelmann." March 6, 1868. New York: International Publishers, 1987. *MECW*, Vol. 42.
——— "Marx to Lassalle." January 16, 1861. New York: International Publishers, 1985. *MECW*, Vol. 41.
——— "Marx to Laura and Paul Lafargue." February 15, 1869. New York: International Publishers, 1988. *MECW*, Vol. 43.
——— "Marx to Meyer." April 30, 1867. New York: International Publishers, 1987. *MECW*, Vol. 42.
——— "Marx to Pavel Vasilyevich Annenkov." December 28, 1846. New York: International Publishers, 1982. *MECW*, Vol. 38.
——— "Moralising Criticism and Critical Morality: A Contribution to German Cultural History Contra Karl Heinzen." New York: International Publishers, 1976. *MECW*, Vol. 6.
——— "On Proudhon." New York: International Publishers, 1985. *MECW*, Vol. 20.
——— "Preface to the First German Edition." *Capital,* Vol. 1. New York: International Publishers, 1996. *MECW*, Vol. 35.
——— "Preface" to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*. New York: International Publishers, 1987. *MECW*, Vol. 29.

——— "Speech at the Anniversary of the People's Paper." New York: International Publishers, 1980. *MECW*, Vol. 14.
——— "Speech at the Trial of the Rhenish District Committee of Democrats." New York: International Publishers, 1977. *MECW*, Vol. 8.
——— "The British Rule in India." New York: International Publishers, 1979. *MECW*, Vol. 12.
——— "The Leading Article in No. 179 of the Kölnische Zeitung." New York: International Publishers, 1975. *MECW*, Vol. 1.
——— "The Value-Form, Appendix to the 1st German Edition of Capital, Volume 1, 1867." http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1867-c1/appendix.htm (accessed July 17, 2011).
——— "Theses on Feuerbach." New York: International Publishers, 1976. *MECW*, Vol. 5.
——— "To Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States of America." New York: International Publishers, 1985. *MECW*, Vol. 20.
——— *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*. New York: International Publishers, 1988. *MECW*, Vol. 30.
——— *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*. New York: International Publishers, 1989. *MECW*, Vol. 31.
——— *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*. New York: International Publishers, 1989. *MECW*, Vol. 32.
——— *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*. New York: International Publishers, 1991. *MECW*, Vol. 33.
——— *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*. New York: International Publishers, 1994. *MECW*, Vol. 34.
——— *Capital.* Vol. 1. New York: International Publishers, 1996. *MECW*, Vol. 35.
——— *Capital.* Vol. 3. New York: International Publishers, 1998. *MECW*, Vol. 37.
——— *Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law*. New York: International Publishers, 1975. *MECW*, Vol. 3.
——— *Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law: Introduction*. New York: International Publishers, 1975. *MECW*, Vol. 3.
——— *Critique of the Gotha Program*. New York: International Publishers, 1989. *MECW*, Vol. 24.
——— *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844*. New York: International Publishers, 1975. *MECW*, Vol. 3.
——— *First Draft of the Civil War in France*. New York: International Publishers, 1986. *MECW*, Vol. 22.
——— *On the Jewish Question*. New York: International Publishers, 1975. *MECW*, Vol. 3.
——— *Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy*. New York: International Publishers, 1986. *MECW*, Vol. 28.
——— *Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy*. New York: International Publishers, 1987. *MECW*, Vol. 29.

——— *The Class Struggles in France*. New York: International Publishers, 1978. *MECW*, Vol. 10.
——— *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*. New York: International Publishers, 1979. *MECW*, Vol. 11.
——— *The Poverty of Philosophy*. New York: International Publishers, 1976. *MECW*, Vol. 6.
——— *Wage Labour and Capital.* New York: International Publishers, 1977. *MECW*, Vol. 9.

OTHER WORKS

Acton, Harry B. *The Illusion of the Epoch: Marxism-Leninism as a Philosophical Creed*. London: Cohen & West, 1955.
Althusser, Louis and Etienne Balibar. *Reading Capital.* London: Verso, 2009.
Althusser, Louis. *Essays in Self-Criticism*. London: NLB, 1976.
——— *For Marx*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1969.
——— *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*. New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971.
Aristotle. *The Nicomachean Ethics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.
Arnold, N. Scott. *Marx's Radical Critique of Capitalist Society*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990.
Arthur, Christopher J. "Systematic Dialectic." *Science & Society* 62, no.3 (1998): 447–459.
Avineri, Shlomo. *The Social and Political Thought of Karl Marx*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968.
Bernstein, Eduard. *Selected Writings, 1900–1921*. Atlantic Highlands: Humanities Press, 1996.
Blanshard, Brand. *The Nature of Thought*, Vol. 2. London: George Allen & Urwin Ltd, 1939.
Brenkert, George G. "Freedom and Private Property in Marx." In *Marx, Justice, and History*, edited by Marshall Cohen, Thomas, Nagel and Thomas Scanlon, 80–105. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980.
——— *Marx's Ethics of Freedom*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1983.
Brien, Kevin M. *Marx, Reason, and the Art of Freedom*, 2nd Edition. Amherst: Humanity Books, 2005.
Burbidge, John W. *Hegel's Systematic Contingency*. New York: Palgrave, 2007.
Callinicos, Alex. *Marxism and Philosophy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983.
Carver, Terrell. *Engels*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981.
Cohen, Gerald A. "Review of Wood's Karl Marx." *Mind* 92, no. 367 (1983): 440–445.
——— "The Labor Theory of Value and the Concept of Exploitation." In *Marx, Justice, and History*, edited by Marshall Cohen, Thomas Nagel, and Thomas Scanlon, 135–157. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980.
——— *Self-Ownership, Freedom and Equality*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

——— "Base and Superstructure: A Reply to Hugh Collins." *Oxford Journal of Legal Studies* 9, no. 1 (1989): 95–100.
——— *Karl Marx's Theory of History: A Defence*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978.
Colletti, Lucio. *From Rousseau to Lenin: Studies in Ideology and Society*. New York: Monthly Review Press, 1972.
Draper, Hal. *Karl Marx's Theory of Revolution: Volume 1: State and Bureaucracy*. New York: Monthly Review Press, 1977.
Dunayevskaya, Raya. *Marxism and Freedom*. London: Pluto Press, 1971.
Easton, Loyd David and Kurt H. Guddat, eds. *Writings of the Young Marx on Philosophy and Society*. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1997.
Elster, Jon. *Making Sense of Marx*. London: Cambridge University Press, 1985.
Engels, Frederick. "Engels to Marx." June 16, 1967. New York: International Publishers, 1987. *MECW*, Vol. 42.
——— *Anti-Duhring: Herr Duhring's Revolution in Science*. New York: International Publishers, 1987. *MECW*, Vol. 25.
——— "Engels to Joseph Bloch." September 21–22, 1890. New York: International Publishers, 2001. *MECW*, Vol. 49.
Evans, Peter B., Dietrich Rueschemeyer and Theda Skocpol, eds. *Bringing the State Back In*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985.
Ferrarro, Joseph. *Freedom and Determination in History According to Marx & Engels*. New York: Monthly Review Press, 1992.
Feuerbach, Ludwig. "Preliminary Theses on the Reform of Philosophy." In *German Socialist Philosophy*, Vol. 40, edited by Wolfgang Schirmacher, 42–59. New York: Continuum, 1997.
——— "Principles of the Philosophy of the Future." In *German Socialist Philosophy*, Vol. 40, edited by Wolfgang Schirmacher, New York: Continuum, 1997.
——— *The Essence of Christianity*. Amherst: Prometheus Books, 1989.
Fromm, Erich. *Marx's Concept of Man*. New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1961.
Geras, Norman. *Marx and Human Nature: Refutation of a Legend*. London: Verso, 1983.
Gould, Carol C. *Marx's Social Ontology: Individuality and Community in Marx's Theory of Social Reality*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1980.
Gouldner, Alvin W. *The Two Marxisms*. New York: Seabury Press, 1980.
Harvey, David. *A Companion to Marx's Capital.* London: Verso, 2010.
Hegel, Georg W. F. *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975.
——— *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.
——— *Hegel's Science of Logic*. New York: Humanity Books, 1989.
——— *Introduction to Philosophy of History*. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1988.
——— *The Encyclopedia Logic: Part I of the Encyclopedia of Philosophical Sciences with the Zusatze*. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1991.

——— *The Phenomenology of Mind*. Mineola: Dover, 2003.
Heller, Agnes. *The Theory of Need in Marx*. New York: St. Martin Press, 1976.
Holt, Justin. *Karl Marx's Philosophy of Nature, Action and Society: A New Analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009.
Hook, Sidney. *From Hegel to Marx: Studies in the Intellectual Development of Karl Marx*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1994.
Horkheimer, Max. *Between Philosophy and Social Science*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1993.
——— *Critical Theory: Selected Essays*. New York: Continuum, 1992.
Hume, David. *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1983.
——— *An Inquiry Concerning Human Understanding*. Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall, 1995.
Husami, Ziyad I. "Marx on Distributive Justice." In *Marx, Justice, and History*, edited by Marshall Cohen, Thomas Nagel, and Thomas Scanlon, 42–79. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980.
Jay, Martin. *Marxism and Totality*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1984.
Jessop, Bob. *The Capitalist State*. New York: New York University Press, 1982.
Jordan, Zbigniew A. *The Evolution of Dialectical Materialism*. New York: St Martin's Press, 1967.
Kain, Philip J. *Marx and Ethics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988.
Kamenka, Eugene. *The Ethical Foundations of Marxism*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972.
Kane, John. "The End of Morality? Theory, Practice, and the 'Realistic Outlook' of Karl Marx." In *Theory and Practice: Nomos XXXVII*, edited by Ian Shapiro and Judith Wagner DeCew, ch. 14. New York: New York University Press, 1995.
Kant, Immanuel. *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals*. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1981.
——— *The Critique of Judgment*. Amherst: Prometheus Books, 2000.
——— *The Metaphysical Elements of Justice*. New York: Macmillan, 1965.
Kaufmann, Walter. *Hegel: A Reinterpretation*. Garden City: Anchor, 1965.
Kautsky, Karl. *Ethics and the Materialist Conception of History*. Chicago: Charles H. Kerr, 1907.
Kolakowski, Leszek. *Main Currents of Marxism: The Founders*, Vol. 1. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978.
Korsch, Karl. *Marxism and Philosophy*. New York: Monthly Review Press, 1970.
Lenin, Vladimir I. "On Dialectics." *Selected Works*, Vol. 11. New York: International Publishers, 1943.
Lichtheim, George. *From Marx to Hegel*. New York: Herder and Herder, 1971.
Locke, John. *Second Treatise of Government*. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1980.
Lukács, Georg. *History and Class Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectics*. Cambridge: The MIT University Press, 1997.
Lukes, Steven. *Marxism and Morality*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985.

Majumdar, Margaret A. *Althusser and the End of Leninism?* London: Pluto Press, 1995.

Marcuse, Herbert. *Negations: Essays in Critical Theory*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1968.

——— *Reason and Revolution: Hegel and the Rise of Social Theory*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1960.

Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. *Phenomenology of Perception*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962.

Mészáros, István. *Marx's Theory of Alienation*. London: Merlin Press, 2005.

Mill, John S. "Utilitarianism." In *On Liberty and Other Essays*, edited by John Gray, 131–204. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.

Miller, Richard W. *Analyzing Marx: Morality, Power and History*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984.

Ollman, Bertell. *Alienation: Marx's Conception of Man in Capitalist Society*, 2nd Edition. London: Cambridge University Press, 1976.

——— *Dance of the Dialectic: Steps in Marx's Method*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2003.

——— *Dialectical Investigations*. New York: Routledge, 1993.

Pashukanis, Evgeny B. *Law and Marxism: A General Theory*. London: Ink Link, 1978.

Peffer, Rodney G. *Marxism, Morality, and Social Justice*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990.

Plekhanov, George V. *Fundamental Problems of Marxism*. New York: International Publishers, 1969.

Popper, Karl R. *The Open Society and Its Enemies: Hegel and Marx*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971.

Poulantzas, Nicos. *Political Power and Social Classes*. London: NLB, 1973.

——— *State, Power, Socialism*. London: NLB, 1978.

Rader, Melvin. *Marx's Interpretation of History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979.

Resnick, Stephen A. and Richard D. Wolff. *Knowledge and Class: A Marxian Critique of Political Economy*. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1989.

Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. "Discourse on the Origin and the Foundation of Inequality Among Men." In *The Discourses and Other Early Writings*, edited by Victor Gourevitch, 111–231. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

Sayer, Derek. "The Critique of Politics and Political Economy: Capitalism, Communism, and the State in Marx's Writings of the Mid-1840s." *The Sociological Review* 33, no. 2 (1985): 221–253.

——— *Capitalism and Modernity: An Excursus on Marx and Weber*. London: Routledge, 1990.

——— *The Violence of Abstraction: The Analytical Foundations of Historical Materialism*. London: Basil Blackwell, 1987.

——— *Marx & Alienation: Essays on Hegelian Themes*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.

——— "Marxism and the Dialectical Method: A Critique of G.A. Cohen." *Radical Philosophy* 36, no. 3 (1984): 4–13.
——— *Marxism and Human Nature*. New York: Routledge, 1998.
Schaff, Adam. *Marxism and the Human Individual*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1970.
Shaw, William H. "The Handmill Gives You the Feudal Lord: Marx's Technological Determinism." *History and Theory* 18, no. 2 (1979): 155–176.
Simpson, John, ed. *The Oxford Book of Exile*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.
Smith, Cyril. *Marx at the Millennium*. London: Pluto Press, 1996.
Spinoza, Baruch. *Ethics: Treatise on the Foundation of the Intellect and Selected Letters*. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1992.
——— *Improvement of the Understanding: Ethics and Correspondence of Benedict De Spinoza*. New York: M. Walter Dunne, 1901.
Sweezy, Paul M. *The Theory of Capitalist Development*. New York: Monthly Review Press, 1970.
Tabak, Mehmet. "Marx's Theory of Proletarian Dictatorship Revisited." *Science & Society* 64, no. 3 (2000): 333–356.
Thomas, Paul. *Alien Politics: Marxist State Theory Retrieved*. New York: Routledge, 1994.
——— *Marxism and Scientific Socialism: From Engels to Althusser*. New York: Routledge, 2008.
Tucker, Robert. *Philosophy and Myth in Karl Marx*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964.
van den Berg, Axel. *The Immanent Utopia: From Marxism on the State to the State of Marxism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988.
Venable, Vernon. *Human Nature: The Marxian View*. Cleveland: Meridian Books, 1966.
Wartofky, Marx W. *Feuerbach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982.
West, Cornel. *The Ethical Dimensions of Marxist Thought*. New York: Monthly Review Press, 1991.
Wood, Allen W. "The Marxian Critique of Justice." In *Marx, Justice, and History*, edited by Marshall Cohen, Thomas Nagel, and Thomas Scanlon, 3–41. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980.
——— "Marx on Right and Justice: A Reply to Husami." In *Marx, Justice, and History*, edited by Marshall Cohen, Thomas Nagel, and Thomas Scanlon, 106–134. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980.
——— *Karl Marx*, 2nd Edition. New York: Routledge, 2004.
Wright, Erik Olin, Andrew Levine and Elliott Sober. *Reconstructing Marxism: Essays on Explanation and the Theory of History*. New York: Verso, 1992.

INDEX

NOTE: Locators followed by 'n' refer note numbers.

Abraham, Lincoln, 203n45
Absolute Idea, *see* Hegel, G. W. F.
abstract
 categories, 5
 community, 161–2
 individual, 12, 13, 14
 labor, 87–8, 91–2, 102
 values, 112
abstraction, 2, 21
 and fetishism, 89
 historical, 13, 17, 20
 of human nature, 16, 75, 79, 101
 ideological, 113, 114, 123, 134
 and internal relations, 62
 level of, 5, 21, 55, 65, 69, 74, 75, 76, 123, 142, 156, 161
 method of, 68
Acton, H. B., 53, 189n7
actualization, 4, 9, 30, 31, 33, 43, 48, 76, 92
 self-actualization, 4, 14, 16, 20, 47, 111, 112, 189n7
alienation
 according to Hegel, 83
 of activity, 76, 78, 80–1, 83, 84, 85
 of activity and capital, 91–5
 as the basis of historical materialism, 108
 as the basis of justice, 119–21
 basis of superstructure, 108
 and capitalist production, 77–8
 of the capitalists, 99
 and class, 102, 166–8, 182n6
 of classes in capitalism, 99
 as commodification of human powers, 83–4
 as evaluation, viii, 80
 as explanation, viii, 80
 as explanation of bourgeois society, 105
 vs. externalization, 197n18
 and fetishism, 89
 as forced labor, 82–3
 form other human beings, 80
 from other individuals and commodity production, 90–1
 from product, 80
 from product as capital, 95–9
 from product as commodities, 85–91
 from the species, 80
 and human nature, 81–3
 as human suffering, 81–3
 the importance of, in Marx's philosophy, 170
 of labor and the bourgeois rights, 122–5
 and the labor theory of value, 85–91
 of the species and egotism, 101–2
 and surplus value, 93
 and the theory of the state, 143, 161–8

Althusser, Louis, 1, 174n7, 175n2, 181n3, 181n5, 182n7, 182n9, 182n10, 182n11, 189n16, 189n20
 critique of Hegel's philosophy of internal relations, 57
 dialectical materialism, 28
 historical subject, 26–8
 on humanism, 26–8
 inversion of Hegel's idealism, 28
 on Lenin, 26–7
 overdetermination, 56–7
 process without a subject, 2, 26–8
 theory of contradictions, 56–7
 young vs. mature Marx, 26–8
analytical philosophy (Marxism), viii, 54, 62, 63, 174n11
antithesis in nature and in history, 37
appearance, 3, 4, 5, 156, 171
 unity of essence and appearance, 23
Aristotle, 4, 28, 185n34
 action and production of gods, 33
 actuality, 4
 potentiality, 4
 self-sufficiency of gods, 33
Arnold, N. Scott, 203n34
Arthur, Christopher J., 193n56
Avineri, Shlomo, 178n27, 185n25

Balibar, Etienne, 182n11
bellum omnium contra omnes, 102, 136, 137, 161, 162
Bernstein, Eduard, 115, 203n29
Betham, Jeremy, 23
Blanshard, Brand, 189n3
Brenkert, George G., 203n19
Brien, Kevin M., 176n6, 188n3, 196n9
Burbidge, John. W, 178n24
bureaucracy, 149–50

Callinicos, Alex, 173n3
capital
 dead and living labor, 96
 as dead labor, 93, 95
 fetishism of, 95
 as a hostile force, 95–9
 primitive accumulation of, 41, 150–1
 as social relations, 65–6
 and wage labor, dialectical relations of, 66
capitalism
 and dehumanization, 110–11
 development of, 41–3
 expansionist tendencies, 43–4
 general laws of motion of, 42
 as a historical product, 79
 tendency of its own negation, 43
Carver, Terrell, 175n13
Chernyshevsky, N. G., 39–40
civil society, 13, 14, 16, 51, 60, 137, 143, 150
 and alienation of individuals, 102, 119, 120, 136, 167
 as standpoint of materialism, 13, 23, 24
 and state, 150, 153, 154, 160, 162, 163, 164–5
class, 26–7, 41, 44, 64, 83, 89, 90, 97–9, 111, 127–9, 132–3, 135, 136, 138, 141, 143–7, 150, 161, 164, 166–8, 171, 181n5, 190n28, 191n31
 and alienation, 102, 166–8, 182n6
Cohen, Gerry A., 28, 62, 189n8, 189n9, 189n11, 189n13, 190n23, 191n34, 202n7, 203n24, 203n25
 analytic method of isolation, 54–5
 on exploitation and justice, 113
 primacy thesis of historical materialism, 54
 superstructure and economic base, 59

Colletti, Lucio, 178n27, 183n14, 185n32
colonialism, 44
commodity
 and capital, 91–5
 fetishism, 88–90
 living labor as, 66, 84–5
communism, 204n49
 as a critical standpoint, 172
 and freedom, 82
 and human nature, 45
 as the negation of the negation, 45
 prediction of, 43
 as a real potentiality, 172
 as the result of history, 45–6
communist ideas, 137–8
concrete
 its conceptualization, 68
 definition of, 68
 and Hegelian idealism, 68, 182n8
 labor, 88
 sensibly-concrete, 4, 8, 30, 31, 43, 55, 68, 107
 whole, 55, 61, 67, 109, 112, 170
consciousness, viii, 8, 9, 20, 21, 30, 31, 32–3, 47, 48, 57, 58, 138, 149, 162, 178n28, 182n9, 184n25, 185n30, 185n32, 186n49, 188n86, 211n57
constant capital, 92
consumption as production, 71–2
contract as the illusory basis of freedom, 121–2
contradictions, 170–1
cooperation, 192n49
critical theory, 139–40
 and human emancipation, 139
 and revolutionary criticism, 139–40

Darwin and Darwinism, 135–7, 207n104
 and human emancipation, 137
dehumanization, viii, 46, 48, 80, 84, 85, 99, 105, 109–12, 138–9, 170, 197n18
 see also alienation
dialectics, dialectical, dialectic method, vii, viii, ix, x, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6–8, 11, 17, 18, 21–3, 25, 26–33, 35, 36, 38, 46–9, 52–7, 62, 63, 64, 66, 67–78, 79, 80, 81, 88, 91, 97, 107, 109, 113, 115, 117, 119, 121, 123, 124, 126, 128, 130, 133, 135, 138, 139, 140, 141, 145, 167, 169, 170, 171, 173n3, 173n4, 174n11, 176n12, 177n19, 177–8n23, 181n1, 182n9, 184n25, 185n32, 189n3, 189n6, 191n35, 192–3n56, 193n57, 194n68, 195n83, 196n2, 196n7, 202n7, 205n61, 211n46
 causality in Kant, 193–4n58
 circularity, 70–3
 contradiction as a process, 6
 contradictions in, 170–1
 critical-revolutionary dialectic of Marx, 48
 determination as internalization, 52
 determination of social whole and its parts, 67–70
 determinism, viii
 fluidity of concepts in, 62
 of form and content, 104
 of freedom and servitude, 123
 Hegel's idealist, 31–4
 of identity, 72
 inquiry, 122
 interaction between human beings and nature, 195–6n1
 materialism, vii, 28
 of mode of production, 63, 66, 68
 objective activity, 170
 processes, 30
 reciprocity, 70–3
 sequence, 69–70
 simultaneity, 69–70

dialectics, dialectical, dialectic method—*continued*
as social practice, 11
systematic, 192n56
unity of consumption and production, 71–2
dictatorship of the proletariat, 147
Draper, Hal, 209n1, 210n32
Duhring, Eugen, 31
Dunayevskaya, Raya, 196n7

Easton, Loyd David, 203n39
economism, 34
efficient cause, 28
egotism, 121, 164
Elster, Jon, 174n11, 176n4, 187n57, 187n60, 187n65, 187n70, 187n73, 187n75, 190n22, 202n7, 203n40, 210n34
ends and means, 39
Marx's justification of human suffering, 40
teleological view of history, 39
Engels, Frederick, 37, 62, 179n45, 186n49, 192n37, 203n29
materialism and real humanism, 37
reaction to economic determinism, 209n2
ensemble of social relations, 12, 14
essence, 3–4, 29–32, 48, 57, 61, 64, 74–6, 86–7, 120, 155, 163–4, 167, 170, 176n11, 176n12, 176n13, 177n19, 185n32, 188n90, 195n73, 198n34, 210n26
dialectical unity of essence and appearance, 23
of structure, 73–7
see also human essence; substance
eternal
laws, 133
necessity, 20
truths, 136
Evans, Peter B., 208n1

exchange value
depends on the concrete whole, 68
dissolution of activity into, 90
and dissolution of society, 90–1
equivalent exchange of, 93
exchange of, as apparent exchange, 124
as the false basis of all relations, 123
of human powers, 84
mediates use value, 92
as a part of commodity value, 87
as personal worth, 84
and "the rights of man," 121
universalization of, 88
existence, 3, 4, 5, 10, 12, 15–17, 19, 20, 22, 23, 30, 34, 37, 38, 47, 48, 52, 53, 56–7, 62, 66, 77, 83, 88, 99, 103–5, 130, 134, 139, 140, 146, 149, 163, 170, 172
exploitation
and alienation, 102
as the basis of political domination, 155
as the basis of private property, 124, 134, 139
and bourgeois conception of utility, 102
and capital accumulation, 93
definition of, 102
equality and inequality in, 123–4
forces of production as instruments of, 98
as the purpose of organizing production, 103, 111
as robbery, 126–7
as squandering of labour power, 97
as theft, 113

Ferrarro, Joseph, 189n10
fetishism, 199n60
general theory of, 88–90

Feuerbach, Ludwig, 2, 12, 13–14, 15, 23, 179n33, 179n47, 180n56, 185n35
on Hegel's Absolute Idea, 33–4
materialism of, 9–10
philosophy of, 179n35, 179n37, 179n38
sense-perception determinism of, 10–11
forced labor and freedom, 82–3
force in history, 44
forces of production, viii, 19, 28, 51, 53, 54–6, 59, 60, 62–4, 67, 73, 79, 92, 96, 97, 98, 103
as alienated social relations, 95–9
causal relationship to structure, 58–62
freedom, 188n65
as free, comprehensive activity, 20, 82
and servitude as dialectical opposites, 123
Fromm, Erich, 175n4, 176n8, 176n11, 186n42, 196n7

Geras, Norman, 12, 175n4, 178n25, 178n26, 179n43, 187n76
Gould Carol C., 188n3
Gouldner, Alvin W., 174n5
Guddat, Kurt H., 203n39

Harvey, David appearance, 4, 177n15
Hegel, G. W. F., viii, 3, 4, 5, 26–7, 176n7, 177n23, 178n27, 179n29, 179n33, 183n13, 183n17, 183n19, 183n20, 184n21, 184n22, 184n24, 184n25, 185n31, 187n80, 187n81, 187n82, 188n87, 188n90, 188n91, 190n30, 194n60, 194n63, 194n68, 195n81, 196n2
Absolute Idea, 28–31
Absolute Idea as living substance, 30
Absolute Idea defined, 29–30
alienation, 9
and alienation, 83
concept of negation, 182n8
concrete determination, 31
critique of Kantianism, 29
on definitions, 191n36
dialectical circularity, 8
dialectic of negativity, 8
his dialectics, 193n57
end of history, 46–9
essence and substance, 176n12
essence of labor, 8
historical subject, 29–31
idea and dialectics, 195n83
idealism, 9–10
living substance, 8
Marx's criticism of, idealism, 31–4
meaning of *aufheben,* 184n23
moral positivism, 131
moral positivism, 46–9
negation, 31
on pantheism, 183n14, 183n15
philosophy as circle, 71
philosophy of history, 29–31
self-consciousness as human essence, 9
subjective totality, 29
teleological view of history, 26, 39
view of state, 150
world history, 30
Heinzen, Karl, 130–3
Heller, Agnes, 20, 180n54, 180n65
historical materialism, vii, 5, 13
according to G. A. Cohen, 54–5
according to Plekhanov, 52–3
first premise of, 25
general theory of history, 25
human activity as its premise, 34–9
Marx's summary of, 58–60
historicism, 5
Hobbes, Thomas, 102, 136, 161
Holt, Justin, 176n4
Hook, Sidney, 70, 178n27, 185n30, 194n64

Horkheimer, Max, 139, 208n120, 208n122, 208n123, 208n125
human dignity, 128
human essence, viii, x, 1, 2–3, 5, 12–17, 20, 22–3, 26, 45, 81–3, 127, 139–40, 170, 172, 174n7, 175n3, 175n4
 and alienation, 170
 and essential powers, 9, 16–20
 as inner-self, 7
 vs. isolated individual, 12
 and needs, 16–20
 and religious sentiment, 11–12
 and social being, 2
 as social being of individuals, 14–16
 as the standpoint of alienation, 81
 see also essence; human nature
human nature
 as the basis of Marx's ontology, 173n4
 and communism, 203–4n49
 and communism, 45
 as "ensemble of social relations," 7
 in existence, 7
 as first premise of history, 25–6
 in general, 23–4
 general abstraction of, 13
 historically modified, 23
 and values, 111–12
 zoon politikon, 16
human science, vii, 174n6
humanism, 28
 as the basis of historical materialism, 35
 definition of, 36
 as explanation and evaluation, 36
 history of, 35–6
 and materialism, 36–9
humanist materialism, 9
Hume, David, 183n16
Husami, Ziyad, 111, 203n16, 203n32
ideology, 102, 109, 113, 128, 131, 133, 201n1, 207n109
instruments of production
 and abstract labor, 97
 and dispossession of the worker, 97
 in general, 95–6
 and intensification of exploitation, 97
 and isolation of individuals, 97
 as tools of enslavement, 97–8
internal relations, 52, 55, 57, 58–9, 61, 142, 171
 boundaries of concepts, 62
 cause and effect in, 61
 of forces and relations of production, 62–7
 and human nature, 176n6
 as interpenetration, 189n6
 literature on, 188n3, 189n3
 and the organic whole, 169
 of structure and superstructure, 60–1
inversion, definition of, 201n1
isolated individual, 12
 as the basis of commodity, 92
 in capitalism, 80
 and commodity production, 91
 as the standpoint of bourgeois society, 15–16

Jay, Martin, 185n32
Jessop, Bob, 209n1
Jordan, 181n1
Jordan, Zbigniew A., 175n13
justice
 as alienation, 119–21
 as appearance, 125
 as deception, 125
 and the emancipation of the proletariat, 132
 and exploitation of surplus value, 112–13, 115–16
 as a historical product, 114

as a juridical concept, 109
as a legal form, 116
and slavery, 116–17
as theft, 126–7

Kain, Philip J., 207n109
Kamenka, Eugene, 175n4
Kant, Immanuel, 29, 131, 183n18, 206n78, 206n83
categorical imperative, 200n86
critique of, 128–9
dialectic of whole and its parts, 193–4n58
a priori moral laws, 129
Kaufman, Walter, 184n23
Kautsky, Karl, 207n104
Kolakowski, Leszek, 104, 197n18, 201n102
Korsch, Karl, 173n3

labor
abstract, 87–8, 91–2, 102
abstractly mental, 8, 11
as abstract category, 5
alienation of, 76, 78, 80–1, 83, 84, 85, 134
as essence of value, 198n34, 198–9n42
historical category, 5
theory of value, 85–91
Labriola, Antonio, 207n104
law
and disintegration of community, 167
as inversion, 201n1
as force of production, 61
real basis of, 201n1, 201n1
as relations of production, 60
Lenin, V. I., 26–7
on essence and dialectics, 177n19
Levine, Andrew, 175n11
Lichtheim, George, 178n27
living substance, *see* substance
Locke, John, 120, 205n54
Louis Philippe, 145, 156, 158
Lukacs, Georg, 185n32, 210n57
Lukes, Steven, 135, 202n7, 203n19, 203n33, 207n102

Majumdar, Margaret A, 182n9
Marcuse, Herbert, 3, 8, 176n8, 178n27, 179n31, 179n39, 185n32, 188n2, 188n93, 208n124
on alienation in Hegel, 178n28
on Hegel's negative philosophy, 183n16
on Hegel's notion of essence, 176n11
human essence and appearance, 139
labor as the basis of all societies in Marx, 52
materialism, viii, 25
contemplative, 13
dialectical, 25, 26, 27, 28, 181n1
materialist conception of history, 25, 51–2
old, 13
see also historical materialism
mediation, 80
Merlau-Ponty, Maurice, 182n9
Mészáros, István, viii, 59, 173n2, 174n7, 174n8, 175n4, 178n27, 190n25, 195n84, 196n6, 198n29
Mikhailovsky, N. K., 39, 41
Miller, Richard W, 184n25, 206n81, 206n82, 207n109
Mill, John Stuart, 202n13
mode of production, 41, 102
as activity of production, 190n24
based on slavery, 41
bourgeois form of, 122, 125, 138, 144, 158, 159, 161
character of, 76
dialectical view of, 63, 66, 68, 167, 171
and history, 60
and justice, 116, 125, 167

mode of production—*continued*
materialist conception of, 51
of material life, 58, 59
as social stage, 192n49
and social whole, 167
and tradition, 190n22
transition of-from, 25, 43, 44, 171
vantage point of past and future, 47
moral, morality
condemnation, 112
criticism, 128–33
of emancipation, 135
negation, 130
positivism, 46–9, 114, 133

Napoleon, 133, 143, 145, 158, 164
Napoleonic Code, 167
nature
exchange between individuals and, vii, 20, 21, 75, 76
needs, vii, 3, 6, 9, 20, 22, 26, 32, 33, 34, 37, 71–2, 74, 76, 81, 82–3, 86, 92, 93, 95, 102, 103, 112, 120, 127, 130, 164, 167, 170, 172, 180n53, 180n54, 180n55, 180n62, 180n64
changing and permanent, 16–20
negation
and stages of development, 130
of the negation, 43

objective activity, 3, 9, 34
as the essence of the whole, 74
as a human need, 20
as praxis, 11
as self-transformation, 20–3
objective totality, vii
objectivity of human nature, 9
Ollman, Bertell, 174n7, 175n12, 176n4, 176n6, 188n3, 190n28, 192n38, 192n41, 196n7, 196n8, 196n9, 212n4
on alienation, 80
on human nature, 179n44
internal relations and boundaries of concepts, 62
on internal relations of contradictions, 171
on isolated individual, 180n51
on method of abstraction, 177n18
on needs, 180n53, 180n55
organic whole, 52, 67, 68, 70, 74, 80, 81, 142, 169, 171, 172
organization of capitalist society, 102–5
oriental despotism, 118

Pashukanis, Evgeny B., 205n52
Peffer, Rodney G. 202n7, 206n84
Plekhanov, George V., 28, 189n4, 189n6
theory of historical materialism, 52–3
political power, 131, 132, 143, 144, 145, 153, 154, 155, 159, 160, 166, 205n49, 209n2
and injustice, 131–2
Popper, Karl R., 34–5, 173n2, 186n36, 203n27
potential, potentiality, 4, 14, 16, 22, 25, 31, 47, 65, 72, 92, 111, 171, 172, 199n50, 200n87
Poulantzas, Nicos, 154, 155, 156, 208n1, 211n41
powers, 1, 6–20
development of human, 20–3
praxis, 11, 13, 21, 33, 170
private property, 65, 102
abolition of, 137, 138, 193
basis of the right to, 124
and civil law-justice, 120, 138
and development of bourgeoisie, 157
and disintegration of community, 167
and egotism, 200n87
emancipation of, from the state, 154, 163
historical formation of, in England, 151, 152
and liberty, 119, 139

protection of, 154, 162
Rousseau on, 132
source of misery, 197n18
as theft, 134
as wealth, 120
private property, abolition of, 138
process
as absolute, 27
alienation as a, viii, 78, 80, 81, 84, 85, 89, 91, 92, 94–101, 104, 108, 120, 140
of capital accumulation, 92
of circulation, 124
of consumption, 123
of dialectical internalization, 52, 53, 57, 60, 66, 67, 70, 73
economic evolution of society as a, 6
of exchange, 94, 103, 121, 123
in Hegelian dialectics, 28–31, 32, 43, 48, 76
historical, 38, 41, 45, 153, 169
and human nature, vii, viii, 1, 4, 6, 8, 9, 21, 33–4
of labor-production, 51, 52, 59, 60, 63, 65, 75, 77, 81, 105, 111, 123, 155
of need satisfaction, 17
of negation, 8, 9, 130
objective activity as dialectical, 33
of reproduction, 71, 79, 122
social structure as, 73, 80, 169–70
of surplus extraction, 113, 126
without a subject, 2, 26–8, 49
production
as consumption, 71–2
as the dominant moment, 73–7
in general, 95–6
productive forces, *see* forces of production
profane history, 131
Proudhon, Pierre-Joseph, 63, 69, 123, 133–5
Rader, Melvin, 70, 79, 169, 175n14, 178n23, 181n1, 188n3, 189n6, 195–6n1, 212n1
reductionism, 34
relations of production
as legal relations, 60
see also structure
religion, 12
Resnick, Stephen, 182n11
Ricardo, 15
rights of man, 120–1
Roemer, John, 202n7
Rousseau, Jean-Jacques, 15, 132, 206n92
Rueschemeyer, Dietrich, 208n1

Sayer, Derek, 188n3, 194–5n73, 210n23
Sayers, Sean, 174n7, 176n4, 189n3, 189n15, 197n20
Schaff, Adam, 36, 175n4, 178n26, 180n49, 186n46
Shakespeare, 199n68
Shaw, William H., 192n40
Skocpol, Theda, 208n1
slavery, 127
Smith, Adam, 15, 82
Smith, Cyril, 174n6, 174n10
Sober, Elliott, 175n11
The socialistic bourgeois, 135
social relations, viii, x, 2, 7, 12, 28, 41, 45, 52, 54–6, 57–65, 66, 71, 74, 76–7, 79, 80, 83, 85, 87, 89, 90, 91, 95, 97, 99, 101, 102, 104, 105, 108, 113, 114, 120, 121, 123, 129, 137, 138, 141, 143, 155, 167, 169, 170, 172, 190n24, 192n49, 195n73, 196n6, 199n42
alienated, 79, 8, 91, 102, 104, 105, 120, 141, 143
Althusser on, 56–75
antagonistic, 129, 137, 138, 143
and authority, 95, 99
between things, 90

social relations—*continued*
in bourgeois society and state autonomy, 155, 167
and human nature, 2, 12, 45
of individuals, viii
and mode of production, 58, 59
of production, 77, 87
and property relations, 113, 114
relationship of, to forces of production, 53, 60, 62–4, 79, 97
reproduction of, 99
as structure, 101
work relations and, 55, 61
see also structure
social universe, 4, 6
society in general vs. bourgeois society, 76–7
Spinoza, Baruch, 176n12, 183–4n20
state, the
and alienation, 143, 161–8
autonomy and internal relations, 142
autonomy and the tool state, 153–5
bureaucracy, 149–50
and division of labor, 142–3, 144–5
embeddedness of, 146
as an end in itself, 147–50, 167
executive power, 147
historical agent of capitalism, 150–3
illusory independence of, 167
instrument of ruling class, 145
national unity, 143
neo-Weberian theory of, 141
relative autonomy of, 155–61
variation and commonality in capitalist societies, 142
Stirner, Max, 130
structure, viii, x, 169
and its circular and reciprocal determination, 70–3
description of, 58
main determinants of, 51–2, 79–80
see also social relations
subject as essence, 4
substance, vii, viii, 8, 9, 30–1, 46, 76, 130, 176n12, 183–4n20, 198n34, 198n42
suffering, 40, 82
general concept of, 196n11
Marx's justification of, according to Elster, 40
the most suffering class, 99
superstructure, viii, x, 169
description of, 51
as form, 107
as inversion of sensibly concrete, 107
moments of, 107
see also ideology; law; state, the
surplus value, 66, 79, 93, 94, 96, 99, 103, 111, 112, 113, 152, 157, 199n60
and justice, 115–16, 124, 126, 127, 134
Sweezy, Paul M., 180n68
systematic dialectic, 192n56

Tabak, Mehmet, 210n19
teleological view of history, 26, 39–45
Thomas, Paul, 161, 174n6, 210n62
Tucker, Robert, 186n49

use value, 21, 84, 86–7, 91–4
utopian, 208n119

value, 85
essence of, 198n34
see also labor, theory of value
Van den Berg, Axel, 209n1
vantage point, x, 13, 14, 16, 34, 64, 75, 81, 89, 95, 122, 124, 161, 168, 177n18, 196n7
variable capital, 93, 94
Venable, Vernon, 175n4, 196n11
vindication of chance in history, 43

wage labor
as essence of capitalist society, 66–7
as slavery, 127–8
see also alienation, of activity; labor
Wagner, Adolph, 115
Wartofsky, Marx W., 179n36, 179n40
West, Cornel, 175n4
Wolff, Richard, 182n11
Wood, Allen, 174n9, 176n4, 178n27, 179n33, 196n6, 202n8, 202n10, 202n11, 202n12, 202n14, 203n17, 203n20, 203n22
on Marx's theory of justice, 109–14
wood theft, 108
working day, 151, 159–60
and instruments of production in capitalism, 97
Wright, Erik Olin, 175n11

zoon politikon, 16, 103, 180n52, 200n95